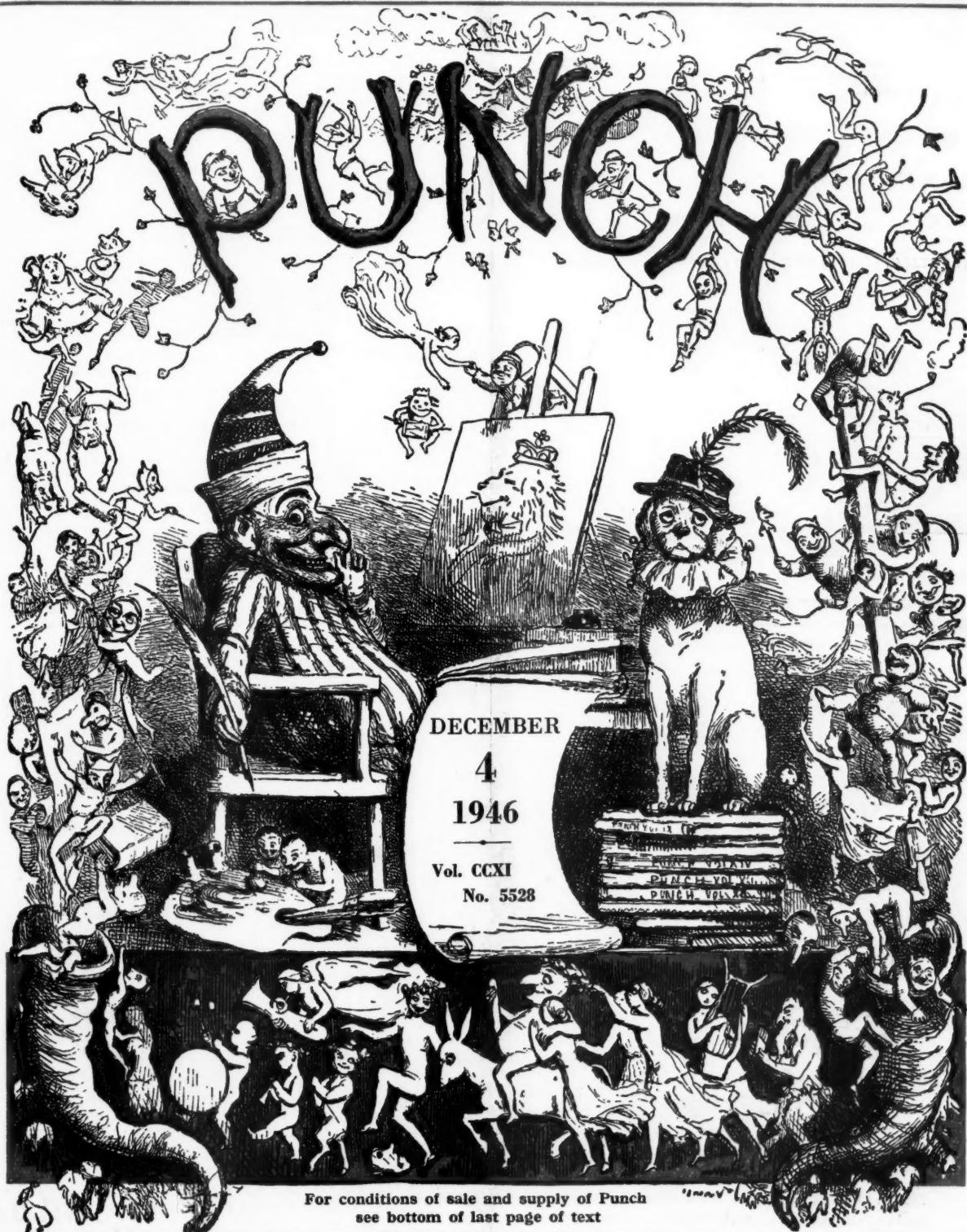


**CADBURY** means *Quality*

DEC 18 1946  
BY ROSE



For conditions of sale and supply of Punch  
see bottom of last page of text

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**CAR & GENERAL INSURANCE CORPORATION LTD.**  
83, PALL MALL, LONDON, S.W.1.

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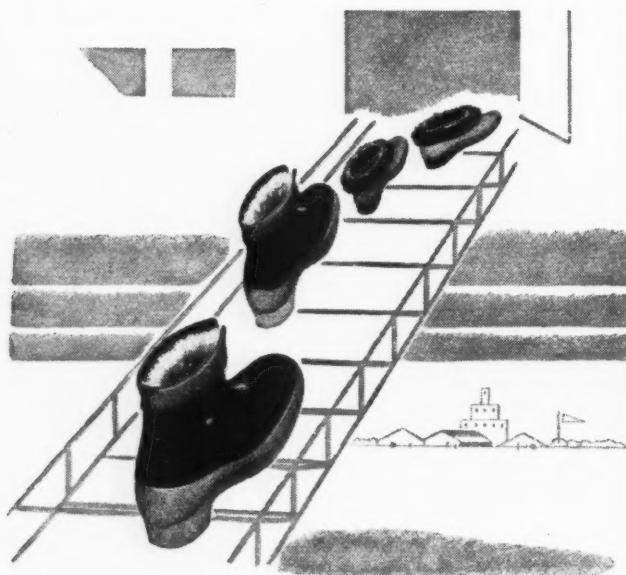


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SUPPLIERS OF GRAMOPHONES RECORDS AND RADIO APPARATUS

"His Master's Voice" leadership in tonal quality and purity of reproduction is no mere accident . . . It has been won—and held—by the finest research organization in the radio industry.



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**Gone today—here tomorrow**

Morlands must contribute their share towards vital exports. But, take heart! Soon colour, comfort and cosy warmth will be back to gladden you in

**MORLANDS**  
WOOLLY SHEEPSKIN



**It's new . . .**

**It's smart . . .**

**It's a WINDAK**

Perfect not only for golf but also for walking and cycling. The Windak 'golfer' is a lumberjacket with a feminine air beautifully tailored, with a slimming waist and sleeves set deep to go easily over a sweater. Made from gaberdine that looks and feels soft and silky but which is the same

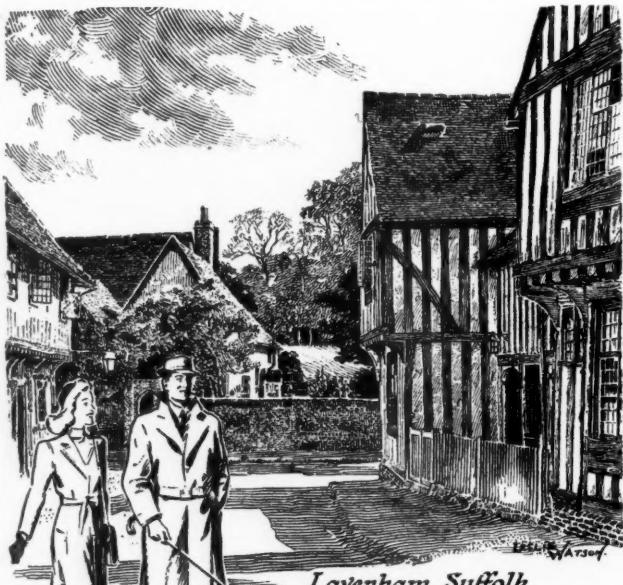
material as that worn by men of the Airborne Division. Windproof, rain repellent, and there's a positive rainbow of colours to choose from—yellow, scarlet, brown, royal blue, maroon, green and fawn. Ladies: prices from 84/- Men's: from 110/- Please write to address below for name of nearest Stockist.

**Wear a**



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Windak Ltd. Paynton, Cheshire



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**The best  
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IN BLACK, BROWN AND DARK BROWN

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Smooth on SALON COLD CREAM . . . a richly lubricating cleanser, to clean your skin meticulously.

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with ORANGE FLOWER SKIN LOTION Shower cool . . . fragrant . . . to refresh and vitalise.

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Pat in SENSITIVE SKIN CREAM . . . a mild emollient especially prepared for the skin irritated by a too rich cream.

This is just one of the Dorothy Gray basic treatments for various skin-types.

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Regd.



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Special  
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Elder  
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Made from Natural Herbs  
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BECTIVE MILLS, WAKEFIELD



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White and Yellow Gold Brooch  
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NOW IN OUR THREE LONDON SHOWROOMS.

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To elegant women a hand-in-stocking  
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Asprey buy articles of modern and Antiqua Jewellery, Gold and Silver, China and Glass, Leather Goods, Fitted Suit Cases, etc. Prevailing prices are at high level, and they strongly advise advantage being taken of existing conditions. They will be pleased to send a Representative where the quantity is too great to send by registered post or rail. Telephone enquiries Regent 6767, extension 40. Parcels should be addressed to, or deposited at:—

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166 NEW BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1

By appointment to

the late King George V

## The Tradition

of elegance and good taste which made Fortts Bath Oliver Biscuits so popular with the 'Beau Monde' of Eighteenth-Century Bath still survives today. Delicately flavoured and easy to digest, their inimitable quality has never been equalled.

*Fortts*

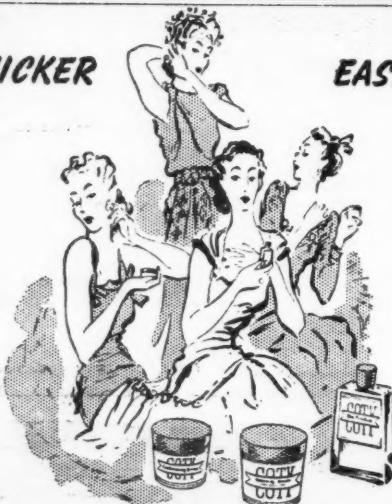
ORIGINAL

**BATH  
OLIVER  
BISCUITS**



QUICKER

EASIER



## The Simple life in BEAUTY CARE

To busy women, bewildered by so many creams-for-this and lotions-for-that . . .

COTY offers a briefer, all-sufficient way to beauty!

Three basic, classic preparations for complete skin care: first, to cleanse; second, to cool and clarify; third, to soften and smooth away dryness.

*Coty*

Conditioning Cream 6/9    Cleansing Cream 5/10    Skin Freshner 6/9

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National Associations are recommended to examine the potentialities of BUXTON as a venue for Conferences.

The Buxton Corporation gladly places at the disposal of Conferences both large and small halls for Conference meetings, and the Hotels and Boarding Houses give full co-operation. Secretaries are invited to write to the Publicity Manager for copy of the book "Buxton as a Conference Town." Address enquiries to Room 4, Pavilion Gardens, Buxton.

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the Greatest Name in Cotton  
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SHEETS · PILLOWCASES · TOWELS · FLANNELETTES · WINCETTES  
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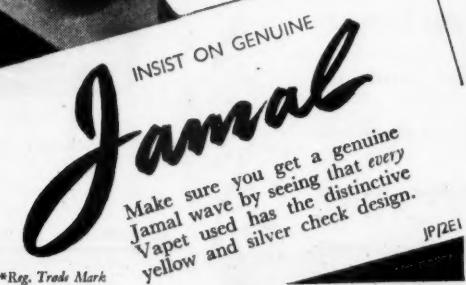
December 4 1946

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Look  
at the  
\*Vapet

Hair styled by  
JOHN HENRY



To do you  
justice

You'll know the new GOR-RAY skirt at a glance. Fine material, eight stylish pleats and neat snugly-fitting waistline—stocked by the leading shops—look for the genuine GOR-RAY label.



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SOMETHING RICH AND RARE . . .

ISN'T that the definition of the ideal Christmas gift? And how thoroughly the gift of a Hoover fulfills it. For the Hoover is a gift rich in the freedom it confers from dusty house-cleaning and endless drudgery. Rare—Alas! Since as fast as seen it is snapped up like all good things in these days of shortages. This however is a situation we are doing our utmost to amend. As fast as we can manufacture Hoover cleaners they are being delivered to Hoover dealers. Your chance will come to 'Give her a Hoover and give her the best'!

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PRE-WAR PRICES!  
Model 262 £175.0  
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ONE OF LIFE'S REFINEMENTS

Those who are  
sensitive to the  
finer shades of  
quality delight in Cussons hand-finished

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TOILET SOAPS



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THE CREAM OF  
SALAD CREAMS



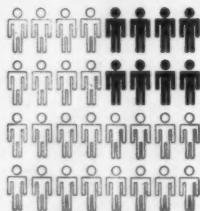
Said the Crab—

It's a pity to crab  
a Crab Salad for  
the lack of a  
good salad cream  
always ask for

**SUTTONS**  
SALAD CREAM

1/- PER BOTTLE

G. F. Sutton Sons & Co., Ltd., Brandon Road,  
London, N.7. Makers of Fine Pickles, Sauces  
and Canned Goods

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A recent medical test of an industrial group proved that Colds and 'Flu were the greatest individual time-losers, causing nearly one quarter of total absenteeism. Colds and 'Flu can be relieved safely and speedily by taking two tablets of 'Genasprin' in a little water—so can

**RHEUMATIC PAIN,  
NEURITIS,  
SLEEPLESSNESS,  
TOOTHACHE AND  
HEADACHE.**

Supplies are limited but your chemist will see you get your share. Prices 1/5d. and 2/3d.

*At any time  
of strain or pain*

**'Genasprin'**  
sees you through!

The word 'Genasprin' is the registered trade mark of Genatosan Ltd., Loughborough, Leics. 10A

Your cakes  
will be  
lighter  
when you  
use

**ROYAL**  
BAKING POWDER

*A quality product of  
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MAKERS OF CHASE & SANBORN  
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THERE'S A POWER  
OF GOODNESS  
IN EVERY SLICE  
OF

**TUROG**  
**BROWN BREAD**  
—EAT IT DAILY

*Difficulty with supplies? Then write to—  
SPILLERS LTD., 46 ST. MARY AXE, E.C.3*

"You won't dear — now we've got a  
**PERMUTIT Water Softener....**"  
The Home appliance that turns  
hard water into SOFT WATER.  
Particulars gladly from  
DEPT. PS PERMUTIT CO. LTD., 151 Regent Street, London, W.I., Regent 2972

Christmas this year will be more  
carefree than of late and we  
suggest that an early expedition  
to Finnegans—the House of the  
Present—is the most satisfactory  
way of finding a suitable gift for  
every member of the family.

*Finnigans*  
OF BOND STREET

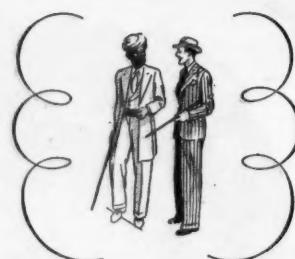
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**LOOK for the name**



**Radiac**  
and you'll find  
**SHIRTS**  
that will  
**LAST**

MCINTYRE, HOGG, MARSH & CO. LTD.  
SHIRT MANUFACTURERS FOR 100 YEARS



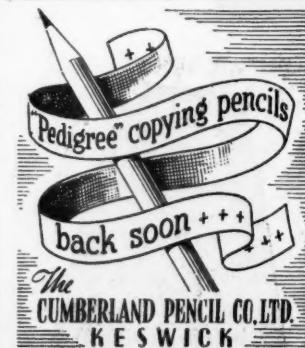
*All the wise of  
all the races  
Always ask for  
Paton's Laces.*

**Paton's**  
SHOE & BOOT  
*Laces*

From your retailer

P.5

WM. PATON LTD. • JOHNSTONE • SCOTLAND



**RATTRAY'S**  
**OLD GOWRIE**  
TOBACCO

We are friendly with the postal authorities chiefly because every package we send out—and there are many thousands each year—is very securely packed and clearly addressed. Even during the stress of the war years the packing never varied. It is our special concern to see that every order received before midday is dispatched the same day. The Rattray service is always kept on the same high standard as the tobaccos.

*Obtainable only  
from*  
*John Rattray*

**TOBACCO BLENDER**  
Perth, Scotland  
Price 1/- per lb. Post Paid  
Send 1/-/10 for sample 1/-  
Min. Post Free.



*Life will have  
more sparkle  
with the return of*

# Schweppes

*It glides like a bird  
on a looking-glass lake;  
you should use a Swan pen  
for your handwriting's sake*



TRADE MARK

**SEAGERS**

**SEAGERS**  
SPECIAL LONDON DRY GIN  
SEAGER EVANS & CO LTD.  
THE DISTILLERY, LONDON, ENGLAND

**GIN**

MAXIMUM RETAIL PRICE  
25/- per bottle.



★  
PRICES of the  
radio receiver illustrated  
above :

**AC MODEL - £15.15.0**  
(plus £3.7.9 purchase tax)

**AC/DC MODEL - £16.16.0**  
(plus £3.12.3 purchase tax)

6 OUT OF EVERY 10 critical listeners who ordered the new G.E.C. radio receivers have already taken delivery. And—from what we've heard—they're not sorry they waited! The demand is big and it's still a case of "fair shares all round" but if you want something good you'll find this outstanding 5-valve all-wave superhet combines a clean-cut reception with such remarkable range and power that it's well worth a little patience. Ask your dealer.

**G.E.C.**

MANUFACTURERS OF  
RADIO & TELEVISION

*Advt. of The General Electric Co. Ltd., Magnet House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2*





Dressing Gowns. Now there's a warm thought. Father Christmases have been known to buy extra ones for themselves. We have a good many other bright and comfortable ideas for men.

*Pop into Austin Reed's*

REGENT STREET, LONDON & PRINCIPAL CITIES

LONDON TEL.: REGENT 6789

ESTB. 1742  
**WHITBREAD**  
& Co. LTD.

*Brewers  
of ale and stout  
for over two centuries*



By Appointment  
Biscuit Manufacturers  
to H.M. The King  
McVITIE & PRICE LTD.

*Say...*

**"McVITIE'S"**  
*the word before  
Biscuits-*

Made by  
**McVITIE & PRICE LTD.**  
Edinburgh • London • Manchester



**A Question of Taste**

IN THE OLD melodramas the cynical villain usually 'puffed a cigarette', whereas the hero 'spotted a pipe'.

As tobacconists to many stage celebrities, we have always maintained strict impartiality in this conflict of tastes. Our resources in fine leaf, and our finesse in blending,

enable us to cater equally for the pipe partisan and the cigarette connoisseur.

We regret that, temporarily, such pleasures must be reserved for our registered customers. But the moment that increased supplies of our blends are possible, new customers will be cordially welcome.

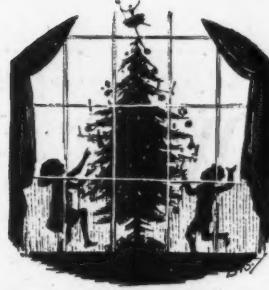
**ROTHMAN** *of Pall Mall*  
DIRECT-TO-SMOKER SERVICE



# PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCXI No. 5528

December 4 1946

## Charivaria

MANY American soldiers who were in London during the war plan to pay return visits next summer. That's why taxis are difficult to get now. They are saving their strength.

• • •  
"SURREY FIGHT TO SAVE COMMONS"  
"Sunday Times."

Middlesex, it is believed, will battle for Lords.



• • •  
The police report that fish queues are getting smaller. Please pass this news on to the people at the far end.

• • •  
"African natives claim to be able to transmit messages up to two miles by merely clapping their hands," states a traveller. There is an obvious opening for them as members of B.B.C. Variety audiences.

• • •  
Thieves recently broke into a harness factory. They left no traces behind.

• • •  
Newspapers are carrying advertisements of a correspondence course in ballroom dancing. A specially shortened course is available for prefab. dwellers.

• • •  
The biggest problem now confronting scientists is how to construct an electronic machine to deal with the problems raised when the present one starts asking *them* questions.

• • •  
"Different directors would make entirely different films from the same book," says a critic. Possibly. Although the usual procedure is for different directors to make the same film from different books.

• • •  
According to a breeder, dogs fed on dried milk will not take distemper. Possibly the dried milk has a slightly better taste.

• • •  
"HOUSING: MINISTER PAINTS BRIGHT PICTURE"  
Headline in "Bath and Wilts Chronicle and Herald."

And the wall to hang it on?



• • •  
Several waitresses at a London restaurant have become engaged to customers. That's the way to get served: ring the belle.

• • •  
Strikes by stage hands have threatened to hold up theatrical performances recently. Mutinies Weds. and Sats.?

• • •  
"An important piece of equipment in nuclear research, the Betatron accelerates electrons to high energy levels . . ." Gibraltar paper.

• They don't seem to need one in Roumania.

• • •  
The three-quarter line of a Rugby team in London is composed entirely of Government officials. The ball is passed from one to the other for necessary action.



▲ ▲

## Youth

W HISTLING, confident, somewhat scorning  
 Elderly people, I'll be bound,  
 Bringing the news of another morning  
 The newspaper boy comes round.

What for him do the Destiny-Shapers,  
 The Three Dark Sisters, hold in store  
 As he pushes somebody else's papers  
 Into the wrong front door?

Football—films—and his dreams are sunny.  
 Fame and fortune are his to seek,  
 Love and laughter and lots more money  
 Than seventy bob per week.

Will he look back on his humble winnings  
 Portly, proud, in a huge armchair,  
 Will he despise his small beginnings  
 When he's a millionaire?

"Had it not been for a hundred mercies,  
 Gifts, maybe, that the gods bestowed,  
 Gentlemen, I might be writing verses  
 Or breaking stones on the road."

Whistling, confident, somewhat scorning  
 Elderly people—that's his way—  
 The newspaper-boy comes round at morning,  
 But he hasn't come round to-day. EVOE.

• •

## Work

I PROPOSE to-day to write a tough article on the highly basic subject of work. It is a subject all my readers should appreciate, for I imagine they all do some kind of work sometimes, if it is only keeping the house clean and cooking three meals a day, or making table-runners out of old bell-pulls. Not that I shall be saying anything about making table-runners out of old bell-pulls, beyond remarking that as an activity it has little to distinguish it from making bell-pulls out of old table-runners. The kind of work I shall start off with is that known as the office, or even nowadays as a job. When, by the way, did the word "job" start being respectable, or something the stuffy can omit the quotes from without fear that the unstuffy will think they have renounced their stuffiness? Philologists tell us that no one special was responsible for this development; it was just a mass movement, the result of everyone gradually realizing that here was a perfectly good word that had somehow got into the hands of a carefree minority.

The first thing I have to say about offices is that they have a tendency to old paint. I know that, with everything else having the same tendency nowadays, it does not stand out in offices so clearly as it did, but there is no doubt that when most people think of their offices they

find they don't know what colour they are, which means, sociologists tell us, either darkish green or brown. My more logical readers may object that darkish green or brown paint is not necessarily old paint, to which sociologists reply that it is, even if it is new; adding to prove it that human nature has only to watch a brown door being repainted brown to realize that it is seeing not so much a repainting as a restatement of belief, however pigheaded. Offices have also tendencies to humpy typewriters, *Whitaker's Almanacks*, lifts that have broken down or are under inspection, potted-meat jars containing dusty paper-clips, lights in the wrong places, semi-circular chair-backs and tea. Office tea has been much written against, and I think it only fair to record how gladdening is its arrival, and how dramatic: the slowly opening door, the pause, the rattle, the bump of knee against wood and the majestic, single-minded entry. Psychologists say that with such a build-up tea would have to be pretty terrible to get an unfavourable press, and is.

Now for a word on the people who work in offices. They are on the whole a decent, assiduous branch of mankind; worrying if they are late (psychologists say that if we glance round at the anxious faces in the Underground of a morning we could, if we knew which were the people being late, pick them out), eager to share their paper-clips, keen on flowers (it is doubtful if there is any more self-satisfied or petted bunch of flowers than one spending a Monday in transit on an office desk) and desperately important when they are busy. Newcomers to an office are worth mention for the extreme interest they provoke and for their brightening effect on the others, who need only have been there a week to feel suddenly quite old hands. Indeed, sociologists think that newcomers stay newcomers until someone even newer arrives. Certainly it would be difficult to assess otherwise the stage at which an office worker stops having to be impressed. And now a bit about the people who find themselves in offices they are not working in.

People who visit offices may be divided into those who go for some business reason, like having written a book or wanting to pay the rates, and those who are just calling to fetch their friends. Callers pure and simple have a very good time, when once they have found the office and, if necessary, picked out the right name from the list on the wall by the entrance. (These lists are always long enough to strike initial hopelessness into the caller's heart, but if they genuinely refuse to disclose the looked-for name then the caller should be next door.) Having found the name, the caller may now go up in the lift if there is one—I am assuming it works to make things more exciting—and owing to looking unwontedly tidy will be nicely genial with any denizens also in the lift; especially the liftman, who, according to sociologists, has as fair a chance of knowing human nature as anyone else who can only hear it over his shoulder. But all this is nothing to what happens when the callers reach the office itself and find their friends looking like people in offices, and themselves looking like the people who call for people in offices; with the friends showing off because they belong to the office and the callers showing off because they don't, and the rest of the office showing off because it seems to be acting in some kind of play, if only as the supporting cast. Why, the whole thing is a psychological glut, and will have quite changed the relation of caller and called-for until, at least, they are outdoors and across the street.

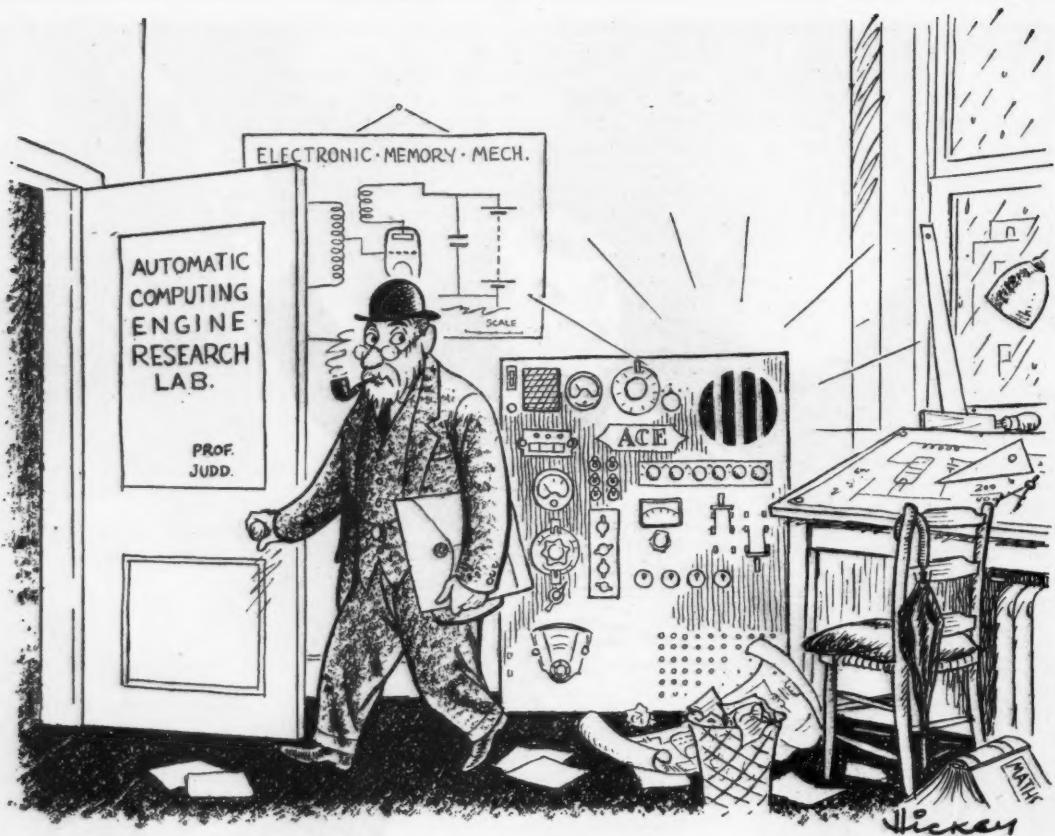
What, a section of my readers will be asking, of the people who work at home—writers and suchlike? Well, to begin with, they do not have to rush off after breakfast and are inclined (I am speaking of those writers who like to



### GENERAL CONFUSION

“We are losing the battle—shoot the officers !”

[“If this had been a military operation, you could introduce discipline into the whole thing and shoot a few builders who did not toe the line.”—Report of Mr. Aneurin Bevan’s speech at the Building Industries Congress at Central Hall, Westminster.]



*"Hi! Take your umbrella."*

start sharp at 9.30) to mess around in a way which would suggest they were not going to start any sooner than they are. The time they do start varies of course, but may be defined as late enough to make them feel their watch is bullying them and early enough to bring on wistful thoughts about lunch. (I am assuming they do not have to get the lunch. If they do, the thoughts will be the normal lunch-getting thoughts sharpened up.) Writers who have just finished a piece of writing tend to reappear in a mellow but cagey mood; mellow because, naturally enough, they are basking in their own achievement, cagey because someone may ask them if they have finished. An interesting point about writers is that when they settle down at their desks or little wobbly tables with that day's issue of the *New Statesman* they are kidding themselves that reading the right stuff counts as writing it. They have a rather worrying tendency to catch up on their telephoning before beginning work—I mean it rather worries them—and have established their priority over the rest of the household for desk drawers and quarto or near-quarto paper.

There are still those readers standing patiently by, leaning perhaps on their brooms, waiting for me to say something about them. The first thing I want to say is that if they really are leaning on their brooms they should know better. It is not much good parking a broom so

carefully upside down in its cupboard if we go and lean on it when we take it out. I should like to say a bit more about this cupboard, which if it exists is under the stairs, with a neatly sloping door to fit its ceiling. Its main features are that when turned out it is found to be much better equipped than its minder had thought, and that its tin of metal-polish, unlike its furniture-polish, never seems to get used up. Brass-polishing, by the way, has never yet been publicly called an art, but it has some affinity with writing and painting in its perseverance and notable outcome. No one who has just polished a door-knob that needed it can see it quite in proportion to its surroundings for a while afterwards. Of housework in general I must remark that method, or doing the rooms in the same order, has an advantage over lack of method, or doing the untidiest first, because it is easier to detach ourselves from our surroundings—in other words, to imagine we are being paid for it—if we start on one particular room for no better reason than that we started on it yesterday. As for shopping, enough has been written on this already for me to say no more than that Saturday shoppers like to gear themselves to the right pitch by imagining, however mildly, that their house is about to be surrounded or cut off or in some way besieged until Monday; it is only a fancy, but very satisfactory in zipping up their vegetable-estimating faculties.

## Still of the Night

MY block of flats and the block opposite form a canyon with unusual acoustic properties; a footstep at street-level rattles my sixth-floor windows, a cat preparing for a late snack at the pig-food bins sounds like a burglar falling amongst the kitchen saucepans.

However, these are familiar noises with no mystery about them. It is what we don't understand that upsets us, and I don't understand something that happens under my windows in the small hours of the morning. It starts with a car screaming up in low gear and stopping with squealing brakes. It is a four-door car, you can hear that. Bang! Bang! Bang! Then there is conversation for six voices.

"Good night, Ted."

"Until Tuesday."

BANG! The driver has got in again. "Not Tuesday. That's Adela's party... Wednesday."

"I can't do Wednesday."

"I can. But isn't George in Liverpool?"

"No, I'm not. That was last week."

Bang! Bang! Two more people have got back.

"What about Thursday?"

"I don't think Freda can do Thursday, can you?"

"Freda's not coming, is she?"

Bang! Bang! Bang! Three more people have got into the car again. It must be getting rather full.

"I am, I am" (Freda, one supposes). "But not Tuesday, because it's Adela."

"Well, look; you ring up Ted, and he'll tell George."

"Is Ted in the book?"

"I don't know. Ted!"

Bang! I think Ted's got back now. Somebody leans on the hooter and it gives out a rich sustained note.

"George, don't! You'll wake everybody up."

"What's that?"

"I said you'll wake everybody. Look, you ring Freda."

"I've forgotten your number, darling."

"Well, let's all get each other's numbers."

Five people get into the already overcrowded car. Bang, bang, bang, bang, bang! Then BANG! That's the driver, the only man who knows how to shut the doors properly. The engine of the car revs up roaringly for about fifteen seconds, then suddenly stops with a double cough. Something goes tick-tick-tick-tick... tick... tick... There is a greasy hissing noise, then silence.

The surprising thing is that there are still a lot of people left in the road. They begin to say good night to each other. This means that number 1 says it to numbers 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6; number 2 to numbers 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6; number 3—but it's exactly like bell-ringing, and takes just as long. Then, after a hush of some seconds, all the people who were in the car get out of it, and all those in the road get in. This means two sets of four bangs each, crowned by two really loud bangs from the driver. The good-nights start again, coming indistinctly this time through the grating whine of the self-starter. The engine starts and the driver makes it go whoop-whoop-whoop, whoop-whoop-whoop, whoop-whoop-whoop...

"Well, good night. See you next Friday."

Bang!

"Not next—this."

"That's the twenty-eighth."

"It's the twenty-seventh on Friday.

Thursday's the twenty-sixth, because that's Adela's party. Ted wants to—"

Whoop-whoop-whoop...

"Adela's is on Tuesday; that's the—"

Bang! Bang!

"But I thought he wasn't coming?"

"He isn't. Are you, Arthur?"

"When, next Friday?"

"No, to Adela's?"

"When is it?"

"Well, if you're going to ring up Ted—"

"No, stupid, Ted's going to ring George—about Freda."

A man's voice says "Good night" resonantly and a single door bangs.

Everybody else gets into the car. Bang! Bang! Bang! There are permutations of good-nights. Then four people who are still outside (I must have been wrong just now) open all the doors, stand at the ready for a moment, then bang them simultaneously at a given sign.

BANG!

The car drives quite quietly away and there is absolute silence, perfect peace. It is beautiful. Until a girl who seems to be sitting on my window-sill suddenly says clearly:

"So they got all the moth out and made it as good as new for four guineas."

For some reason this maddens me, and I get out of bed and blunder to the window shouting "Shut up, shut up!" But as the street and the window-sill are quite empty this only has the effect of waking my wife and child, neither of whom is pleased.

J. B. B.

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## At the Pictures

## SHORT STORY WITH TAIL

I DON'T think many people can have a higher regard than I for the ERNEST HEMINGWAY short story which is the basis for the first ten minutes of *The Killers* (Director: ROBERT SIODMAK); not only was it the first work of Mr. HEMINGWAY's that I ever read (in one of Mr. O'Brien's *Best Short Stories* collections many years ago), but it was the foundation of the first parody I ever had in print. I afflict you with this fragment of autobiography merely to show that in dissenting from the general critical line about the film—nearly everyone seems to be of the opinion that Mr. HEMINGWAY's ten minutes is almost the only worthwhile bit of it—I cannot be accused of any wish to depreciate the original story. But I don't think that that ten minutes stands out as a higher work of art from the whole film; I think the writer who used it as a starting-point, and the director, and the players have produced a work genuinely good of its kind throughout.

It may be a kind you dislike, I admit that: murder, brutality, gunplay, cold-blooded betrayal. Some of you will always be unable to understand how one can enjoy a picture founded on these things without liking any of them as such; it is a constitutional failing of yours, untouchable by argument, and we must just accept it. But the rest of my readers should be able to take pleasure in a good piece of film-making every moment of which has been admirably calculated to arouse one's interest—one's alert, intellectual interest, not merely the gaping empty-headed guess at what-happens-next. At the beginning, as no doubt you know, we get the story almost as Mr. HEMINGWAY wrote it: two thugs arrive in a small town to kill a man who, even when warned, passively accepts his doom. The rest

of the film is simply another writer's idea of what led up to this situation, as it is uncovered by an insurance claims investigator. The story is told in flash-backs (here again, it may be, we run up against one of your dislikes) as this investigator interviews different people who remember the dead man, and much of the detail in these and the characterization of the narrators seems to me beautifully done. BURT

with BETTE DAVIS as the virtuoso (identical twins: they look exactly alike, but they behave quite differently; *oo, isn't it clever!*) and . . . well, it seems to interest me more, as far as my overloaded memory allows me to compare the two; but it still doesn't seem very important. Miss DAVIS is always interesting to watch, and I suppose the average filmgoer is more easily impressed with her ability when

he sees her playing two parts simultaneously than when he has to remember her in one while watching her in another. But there is nothing much in these two characters except the most obvious contrast between the conventional bad girl and the conventional good girl; and the situation of the good girl in the bad girl's place is not unfamiliar. The film is brightened by some of the detail, and by (among others) CHARLES RUGGLES as an understanding cousin, but it is marred to begin with, I think, by intentional comic effects which are out of key with the story, and later by effects that may strike the over-sensitive observer as equally but unintentionally comic. The tale is in general—apart from the mechanical plot based on the "stealing" of one sister's "life" by the other who takes her place—one of those studies of a breaking heart in expensive surroundings that used to form the type of the "Joan Crawford picture"; but with no regard for this fact, the

first part of the film cheerfully seeks our laughter at the usual comic clichés of the identical-twins farce. Later, when the mood has changed, there are serious moments that are too easy to regard with that humorous eye we were encouraged to use at the start—which is fatal to the illusion, such as it is . . .

Instead of writing at length about this I ought to have dealt with the Danish *Day of Wrath*, which I haven't yet been able to see. By all accounts that is a masterpiece, the film of a lifetime, if you can stand it. R. M.



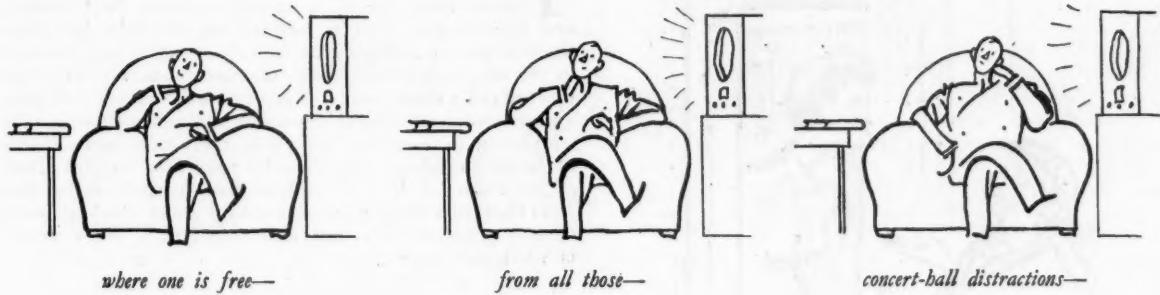
REPOSE  
Swede . . . . . BURT LANCASTER

LANCASTER appears as the victim, a boxer who took to crime after breaking his hand; the pleasantest character is SAM LEVENE as a good-hearted policeman, a friend of his youth, who tried to stop him.

It was in February 1939 (this is autobiography once more) that I wrote in these pages of my lack of interest in the film *Stolen Life*, a display of virtuosity by ELISABETH BERGNER. Now another version of the story has been made in Hollywood as *A Stolen Life* (Director: CURTIS BERNHARDT),

*"Yes, like so many of my genuine music-loving friends, I much prefer to listen at home—*

*Tony Soper*



*where one is free—*

*from all those—*

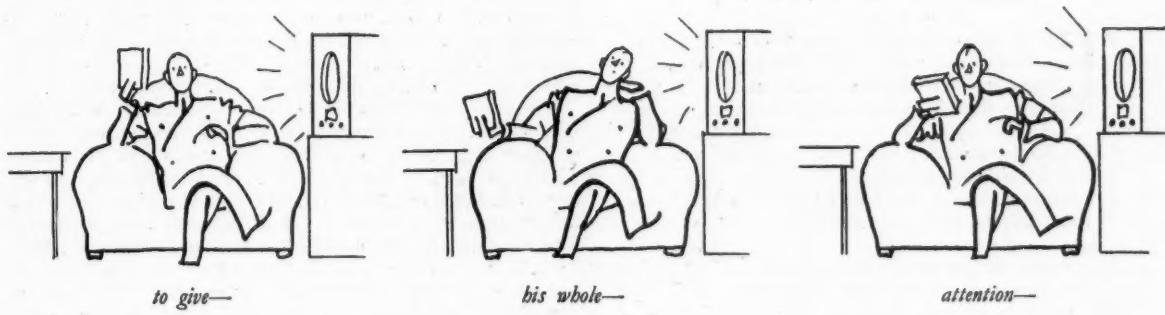
*concert-ball distractions—*



*that make it so—*

*terribly difficult—*

*for the sensitive listener—*



*to give—*

*his whole—*

*attention—*



*to—*

*the—*

*music."*



"Cross my palm with cupro-nickel, dearie."

### Cathedral Tomb

ALL pillars stand in solemn grove  
Where sun and shade hold tournament;  
The tattered banners droop above  
Fitzalan's double monument.

Lady Alicia, Richard the Earl  
Side by side lie quietly;  
On stony mail and carven curl  
The sunlight falls as silently.

Her hands are pointed on her breast,  
Her feet are pillow'd on her hound;  
His brow is smooth beneath the crest,  
Nor shows his side the paynim's wound.

And peacefully the day wears on  
To sound of chanting choristers,  
And bells, and footfalls on the stone  
Of verger and of visitors.

At sunsetting the doors are barred;  
Vespers are done; the moon rides high;  
The hound awakes upon his guard—  
Silence is broken with a sigh . . .

And, while the faithful watch is kept,  
Stone hand in hand is softly laid  
Until they sleep as once they slept  
Before he took the last crusade.

### H. J.'s Belles-Lettres

THIS Belle-Lettre begins by observing that many films and plays are adapted from something else. Sometimes, indeed, a novel is adapted for the stage and the resulting play is adapted for the films and then the film may be adapted for broadcasting, so that whereas in the old days one plot kept one author, now it will keep upwards of a dozen and if it is a historical plot it will keep antiquarians and several censors as well. But there is little adaptation in the reverse direction, apart from such sleights of hand as advertising *David Copperfield* as *The Book of the Film*. I have therefore had a shot at turning Noel Coward's *Brief Encounter* into a short story, it being of course understood that untrammelled in the extreme is what we adapters are.

#### "THAT STRUTS AND FRETS."

It was some years after I first met Lakmé that she told me about The Find. I had just parted with Sulfa and my confidences led to a reciprocal thawing of reserve. She had met him as she was crossing to the Isle of Wight to change her library book. Her hat had fallen into the sea and he had dived to rescue it. Mere politeness bade her bid him good morning the next time they met. The third encounter was on the quay. Suddenly they seemed old friends. They lent over the rail together. He pointed out to her a fog in the Solent. She drew his attention to her book, *The Strange Loves of Louis-Philippe*. The actual passage fled by swiftly, a flicker in time. Ashore, they had watched the wan, tentative pierrots, giggled at the coconut shies, become, in a word, "pals." He allowed her to gather that he was Borough Ichthyologist of Walsall, had been offered a job in Assam, was experimenting in telling soft roes from hard by the use of infra-red. She remembered a certain jeunesse in his enthusiasm. They parted late. Purfrey had waited dinner for her, a congealed chop poised resentfully upon his fork. All the evening she had stared dimly into the distance, scarcely noticing him as he rehearsed "The Song of the Flea," which he was to sing at a Rotary luncheon next day.

The gulls were wheeling, daylight bats among the rigging, and the salt spray scoured the deck-planks with its bitter scalding urgency the next time they crossed to the island. The bollards, like the teeth of extinct mammals, and the derricks, like ferruginous poplars, and the binnacle, like a lunar sundial, emphasized yet attenuated their seafaring. The sun shone for them and birds sang in their inner blood: by mid-channel they had changed hats. Yet their private bubble was burst, rudely and ineluctably. A man approached them, bowed and apologized for his intrusion—a man with cuffs stained by tobacco-juice, the grease on his knees shining with a seedy glow, his pince-nez curiously opaque. Lakmé knew him at once—Purfrey's accompanist, Tandler. Reared among the bistrots of St. Malo, tout, agent and turf accountant, he had run bolas for the Left-Centre in Bayonne, gone underground in Reykjavik, and graduated, via dance-halls in the Isle of Dogs, to a school of music. She did what was, I pointed out to her, the worst thing possible. She introduced The Find as her cousin, to make matters worse adding qualifications—second, once-removed, by marriage. Tandler was not to be side-tracked. His eyes watered with an oily gleam; he muttered "I have my price"; the bitterness in him seared his throat. Softly menacing, he withdrew. Starkly they disembarked. But now the stinging brine in their faces, the spry porters at the quayside, the funnel which



"With care you should get another ten thousand miles out of them."

needed repainting—"their funnel," as they always called it—seemed leprous and shabby. Mile after mile they walked, arguing, planning. He was for taking her to Assam, explaining her away to his wife as a new lady's maid, but she had an attractive alternative to offer.

The leaves are falling from the trees as I write, and there is sourness in the sharpening wind. There is not much more to tell. The bait was easy. There was a new number the pierrots had, about giving a man a horse he could ride. She was sure Purfrey would like it—it would just suit his voice. He himself suggested bringing Tandler to write the tune down. The boat left the jetty on time. The engine-room telegraph reiterated its forlorn tintinnabulations: the wake churned like a half-healed scar. When she got The Find's signal it was as if the knowledge of what to do had always been within her in bud and now had merely come to flower. With a wild cry she leaped into the water, down to the glaucous depths where her lover awaited her with a spare diving-suit and oxygen-cylinder. Far behind her she sensed the splash as, one with belated chivalry and the other with greed, Purfrey and Tandler followed her. Holding her breath and robing quickly she was soon ready to help her companion seize the pursuers' ankles and draw them down to destruction.

She knew the next moves by heart: their separate emergence at lonely coves, to join, after circuitous journeys, at Freshwater. Then the casual hotel acquaintanceship, the collection of the insurance, and marriage. As for his wife . . . she remembered that accident her sister had had . . . the deadly nightshade that had got into the salad. But she must not allow her thoughts to wander.

Suddenly as they made their way along the ocean bed she looked proudly towards The Find. Somehow she was unprepared for what she saw: the thick rubbery body, the goggling eyes, the slow, earthbound walk. In a terrible moment of self-knowledge she realized that never again would she be able to see him as he was, the hairs curling over his collar, the gold tooth—as if, she had often thought, he were perpetually chewing a sunbeam—the moustache like inverted commas beneath his nostrils. Always there would come between them this grotesque mask. It would

be kinder to end it there and then, and leave no regrets, no hopes perpetually unfulfilled. With a deft movement she tripped him up, wrenched away his cylinder, passed onward alone.

It was in Barcelona she told me the end of the story, sitting over an ice she licked with the enthusiasm of a schoolgirl. She was married now, to the owner of a tramp steamer she had hailed by banging on its keel off the Seven Sisters. As for me, I am the Onlooker, the Cosmic Ear. I find it difficult to be annoyed with Lakmé. I suppose I am deficient in the robuster virtues, or perhaps as one grows older one becomes more tolerant. *Quien sabe? Pas moi.*

• • •

### Season of Mists

I WOULD so like to be melancholy, now that the leaves are falling. I would like to walk slowly in the half-dark through the grey streets into the park, thinking how sad things are, how appalling! The futility of them! The stupidity, the crass folly!

I can see myself near the Serpentine, standing in my short fur coat, idly piercing with my umbrella a large brown leaf. I can feel the burden of a great grief which I have invented, binding my throat; a sorrow which no one can understand. It is wholly mine.

Misunderstood I will be. I insist. As desolate as the Row I will walk along, scuffing the leaves with my toes, mourning a lost year at its dying close. My hands in my pockets, my head bent low, I will go bleakly up the Broad Walk in the December mist.

Sad, sad are the little lights of London, the little pale lights on cars, in the lanterns that brave the night on bent green posts. Oh, my heart is a waif, my dreams are ghosts! Oh, melancholy, more vague than the stars, let me think of something I should have done and have left undone.

V. G.



## An Innocent at Large

[*Mr. Punch's special representative is spending a few months in America to find out what is really happening over there.*]

### IX—Denver, Colorado

AM the type of person that comes out of a cinema looking tough, barks commands at bus-conductors and waitresses, and goes about for an hour or so looking for part-time work as a volunteer G-man. The spell always snaps in time, usually when my companion says something like "You know, you'll ruin the shape of



that suit, dear, with your stinking pipes always bulging the pockets." Women have no imagination. Now, far from home, I find that environment plus a keen sense of history is playing curious tricks with my gait. Only this morning I caught myself walking bow-legged down Denver's Larimer Street. My spurs (all right, keys!) jingled merrily, and once or twice I spat conjecturally.\* And all because I had made the pilgrimage to Lookout Mountain, to the tomb of Buffalo Bill.

From Lookout Mountain Denver is a scrap of graph-paper on an immense brown table, scrubbed clean. Like nearly all American cities it is built to a simple geometric pattern; the blocks of masonry are arranged as regularly as the squares on a chess-board and the intersecting avenues take their numbers very smartly from two main axes. If London were plotted in a like manner there would be no Regent Street, and to get from Piccadilly Circus to Oxford Circus you would stagger left, first right, first left, first right, first left, and so on. There would of course be a drugstore on every corner to fortify your sense of directions.

Way back in 1872 a British woman journalist, Isabella Bird, described Denver in these words: "I looked down where the great braggart city lay spread out brown and treeless upon a brown and treeless plain which seemed to nourish

\* I'll show you how some time.

nothing but wormwood and Spanish bayonet . . ." Well, there have been great changes. The great plain is still a tawny arid waste, but Denver itself is colourful and immensely fruitful, because it now receives a rich annual transfusion of snow-water from the Rockies. The people can see their water supply capping the peaks of the Front Range, and they rejoice when heavy storms replenish their stores. On November 2nd I rejoiced with them when an eleven-inch fall barred my way to the Union Station.

Denver lives in slap-happy style, in splendid isolation and very much in the present. I am told that the city came through the war with barely a scratch on its *modus vivendi* or its conscience, and I can well believe it. With its plentiful food and its protective ring of playgrounds Denver could hardly avoid insulation from the worst mental and physical strains of war. Now that most of its "vets" are back from Europe and the Pacific the world's troubles seem very remote and unreal. There is little talk of affairs in New York and Washington, and the headlines have to scream before people will buy a newspaper. War with Russia is "imminent" and "impossible" on alternate days. After only a week in this air-conditioned metropolis even I have lost the edge of my appetite for current affairs. Buffalo Bill seems much more interesting and important than the United Nations Assembly—almost as interesting as the doings of the M.C.C. in Australia would be if I were not so sadly uninformed.

Buffalo Bill (William Cody) died in Denver in 1917. His alias was a tribute to his prowess as a hunter and killer of bison; he is said to have accounted for seventy animals a day during the period when he was feeding the men who built the railroads. Much of his success as a marksman could be attributed to the plentiful supply of "Injuns" in his youth. (Bradman, I am told, used to knock an old tennis-ball against a wall.) He earned early renown for his victorious hand-to-hand struggle against the Cheyenne Chief, Yellow Hand, in the Sioux war of 1876. Later on



Bill cashed in on his notoriety in good old American style by touring the world with a Cowboys and Indians show. It is one of my great sorrows that I missed it.

But Buffalo Bill was only one of the famous characters of the Golden West. There was Richens ("Uncle Dick") Wootton who rode into the camp of twenty cabins on

Christmas Day, 1858, with a wagon-load of provisions to establish Denver's first saloon. Uncle Dick was the forerunner of a worthy band of advertisers and his first move was to dispense free drinks of "Taos Lightning," a peculiarly potent whisky, to his prospective customers. Can you imagine the scene? The covered wagon bursting into Main Street in a cloud of dust with its wheels apparently going the wrong way round? The badmen, toughs and gamblers lounging on the stoops of their shacks and studying the stranger from screwed-up eyes under ten-gallon stetsons? I can. And there is a golden-haired, golden-voiced girl with eyelashes down to her knees and just one decent guy to protect her—a tall, thin, ranging guy, a bit like Gary Cooper and a bit like . . . Hey! I'm getting bow-legged again. Yassir, tha's gold in them tha hills.

Until 1860 the rivalry between the two camps, Denver and Auraria, on the two sides of Cherry Creek, was bitter and bloody. Why else should the first Denver newspaper hedge by calling itself the *Rocky Mountain News*? Why else did it build its offices on piles driven right into the creek, exactly in the middle? Gold failures filled Denver with disgruntled liquor-starved prospectors who shot, cursed and gambled from morning to night—"More brawls, more pistol shots with criminal intent in this log city of one hundred and fifty dwellings," said a report of the period, "not three-quarters of them completed, not two-thirds of them inhabited, not one-third fit to be, than in any community of equal numbers on earth." (And just that one precious blonde Venus to bring out the best in a man of my sort—a man who packs a gun that's never loaded.)

There were a few down-to-earth types content to earn an honest living by farming—"Eny kows that gits into my medders shall have tale cut off by me, Obadiah Rogers." Can you hear the derisive laughter from six-gun Jake as he riddles Obadiah's hat at a hundred yards? Then there were the Indians—who knocked down telegraph poles like skittles as fast as the white man erected them, who laid siege to Denver for many months, and whose arrows quivered into the log cabins in the Old Silent Days of William S. Hart and Tom Mix. What rotten demolition boys the Indians were! Remember how they always set fire to those gimerack railroad bridges across the canyons a few seconds too late? And how they never learned to put an arrow through the vital parts of a loco? I wonder how they'd have made out against the Normans, or the Hastings Redsox? In Denver's heyday, before inflation, scalps were two a penny, And, by the way, in those days you paid in gold dust. A pinch between thumb and first finger was worth twenty-five cents.

\* \* \* \* \*

I could go on and on about Denver's past, but a few days ago it was Hallowe'en and I ought to mention it, I suppose. Well, it was disappointing—very quiet and orderly, no horse-play and very few serious fires. Hallowe'en is now a children's festival, which means that adult males have a wonderful time and an appreciative juvenile audience. Goblins and heavier-than-air goblins, called hobgoblins, flit from window to window smearing soap, from door to door demanding hush-money or immunity ransom, from bar to bar in search of sustaining ectoplasm. But this year there was a shortage of soap.

Still, Denver's "rowdiest yet sanest" Hallowe'en went off very well. In the Ball Park there were mountains of doughnuts ("began by Sam Boscowitz of the Star Bakery, and swelled by the Mayflower Doughnut Corp., the Gus' Bakery, the Tastee Do-Nut Co., and the Golden Cream Do-Nut Co."), hampers of apples, tanks of cider and "lovely

lassies of the Beta, Sigma, Phi Sorority" to dish it out. The Rio Grande Railroad brought a truck-load of destructive items for the big bonfire. But just how orderly Hallowe'en has become may be gathered from this notice:

"You Fellows and Gals are urged to collect old out-houses, fences, sheds, wagons, jalopies and other worthless items for the big shindig . . . they must be accompanied by a note from a responsible person giving consent for the item."

That would cramp anybody's style of writing.

But all the good things distributed at Hallowe'en parties seem rather meagre compared with the gifts showered upon the audience at a Republican rally in the City



Auditorium. Along with the witty slogans and straight-from-the-shoulder speeches there were nylons, shirts, soap and cooking-fats. The Democrats have lodged a number of protests.

P.S.—Under the heading "WIFE SHOOTS SCHOOL HEAD, GOES HOME, RESUMES IRONING," I read the sad story of a man who said he was late because Hallowe'en pranksters let the air out of his tyres. She didn't believe him.

HOD.

### The Only One

WHAT agony the mind assails  
When one's The Only One in tails!  
And can the horror be forgot  
When one's The Only One who's not!  
How shocking is the sacrilege  
To be The One who can't play bridge!  
And do you get a dirty glance  
When you admit you cannot dance?  
In fact if anything's Not Done  
It is to be The Only One.  
To be The Only One at parties—  
Avoiding that is where the art is.  
One lives one's life in constant terror  
Of perpetrating just that error.

But this fear makes my senses numb,  
To be The Only One to Come.

"Disney in Elfland is an odd mixture of the serious and the cod."  
Evening paper.  
Would you draw it for us, Walt?



"Oh, by the way, Mr. Pontifex, you finished absolutely exactly at nine-thirty—don't you think that's just a trifle regional?"

### *Clerk of the Weather, R.A.*

THE Clerk of the Weather ground his colours,  
 The red, the grey, and the blue;  
 He ordered all else from sub-contractors,  
 But this he alone would do.  
 In a crucible, huge as an ocean-bed,  
 He ground the green and the gold  
 With a pestle, made from a comet's head  
 And a rod of celestial steel.

He ordered a thousand tons of snow  
 And ten thousand acres of hail  
 And a million miles of the best sunbeam,  
 Delivered free on rail.  
 He gave exact completion dates  
 And the place where each must go,  
 With a heavy fine for each hour late,  
 And the price was an all-time low.

He ordered a hundred gross of clouds,  
 By the finest masons hewed,  
 From the marble mines of the Milky Way,  
 Carved with exactitude,  
 Cirrus and floccus and cumulus,  
 Polished and waxed and white,  
 With a special line in veined marble  
 For use on a windy night.

The Clerk of the Weather ground his colours,  
 The cinnamon, purple, and cream,  
 So many gallons of linseed oil  
 To so many quarts of chrome.  
 He matched the tints with a rainbow-chart  
 And a spectrum, hung close by,  
 And then with a soft and sable brush  
 He painted a morning sky.



BRINGING IT HOME

## Impressions of Parliament

## Business Done:

Monday, November 25th.—House of Commons: Be calmed.

Tuesday, November 26th.—House of Commons: Eton v. The Rest.

Wednesday, November 27th.—House of Commons: Weather and Films.

Thursday, November 28th.—House of Commons: Civic Restaurants.

Monday, November 25th.—Whether it was the calm before another storm or merely the fact that the storm of the previous week had blown itself out could only be a matter for speculation. But it must be recorded that to-day's proceedings opened in an "After you, Claud—No, after you, Clement" spirit, which helped considerably to mollify right hon. but still ruffled Ministers.

It all began with a sudden change of heart on the part of Professor D. L. SAVORY, the learned Member for Belfast University, who, after intimidating his neighbours by the ferocity of his supplementary questions on Polish affairs, unexpectedly offered Mr. CHRISTOPHER MAYHEW, the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, his heartiest congratulations for his excellent reply.

Mr. MAYHEW, a little dazed, it seemed, could think of no effective retort. Only a moment later Mr. TOM DIBERG, always a stickler for Parliamentary etiquette in his dealings with the Front Bench, had cause to congratulate the Government on a peaceful settlement in Indonesia, and not to be outdone this time Mr. MAYHEW "warmly welcomed congratulations from that quarter."

Even Mr. JOHN STRACHEY, rarely the apple of anybody's eye these days, found to his astonishment that his decision to allow food parcels to be sent to Germany would afford great relief to thousands of people, and Mr. R. R. STOKES was not slow in saying so.

Major TUFTON BEAMISH, on the Opposition benches, rather spoilt the "You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours" atmosphere by first suggesting that the decision was "very welcome" and then asking why it had taken the Minister more than a year to reach it. Mr. RONALD CHAMBERLAIN quickly retrieved this lapse by congratulating Mr. STRACHEY without the reservation made by Major BEAMISH.

But it was all too good to last.

The cheers turned to ironical jeers when Mr. STRACHEY was called upon to explain the functions of the Food Leader Scheme. He revealed the rather startling fact that there were some 23,000 food leaders engaged in the rather obscure task of giving "nutritional leadership" to housewives up and down the country.

This was more than the House could stomach and the roar of laughter brought forth the scathing Ministerial aside: "How easily hon. Members opposite are amused!"

Ignoring a cry from Sir WALDRON SMITHERS that he (the Minister in this case) had no sense of humour, Mr. STRACHEY patiently persisted that the food leaders explained to the more vitamin-minded among housewives the relative nutritional values of foodstuffs so as to raise the level of nutrition in

BELLENGER, the War Minister, who surprised them by declaring quite flatly that none of the three Services wanted regular servicemen to be married under twenty-one. In the end Mr. BELLENGER offered a little sympathy with the cases put before him and enough hope of better things to come to restore the harmony of what had otherwise been a friendly day.

Tuesday, November 26th.—Charterhouse, in the person of Sir WALDRON SMITHERS, scored neatly to-day at the expense of Eton, represented in the House by such stalwart sons as Mr. DALTON and Mr. STRACHEY in the Government and Mr. EDEN opposite.

Sir WALDRON had been ruled out of order for "insinuations and implications" to the effect that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was usually evasive in his replies. Evading the reprimand, he asked Mr. Speaker if he was aware that those who had not had the advantage of being educated at Eton had a saying: "Eton produces the very best and the very worst."

"That," said Mr. Speaker, himself an Etonian, "shows that Eton produces quite a true form of democracy."

One way and another it was quite a trying day for Mr. Speaker, for many hon. Members insisted on making much ado about very little. A quite harmless - sounding question about greyhound shares suddenly plunged Mr. Speaker into a turmoil of bread, circuses, dogs and rackets, from which he emerged no less bewildered than most M.P.s to call the next question without further argument.

While Lieut.-Commander GURNEY BRAITHWAITE vaguely accused the Government of failing to supply the people with bread and with concentrating now on circuses because new capital issues were limited to socially desirable purposes, Mr. SKEFFINGTON-LODGE kept barking out that dog-racing was a racket.

The Prime Minister was called in hereabouts in the new capacity of art critic when Mr. DIBERG informed him of the disappointment caused by the academic character of the designs for the Roosevelt memorial statue and the emblematic sculptures for Waterloo Bridge.

Mr. ATTLEE, exercising more restraint than many professional critics, contented himself with the observation that on many of these art questions opinions were divided. He had his own view, but it was not forthcoming.

The House went on to discuss the



"I have set on foot a re-examination of the potentialities of Fido."—The Minister of Civil Aviation.

the country. It was just as simple as all that, he added.

For those hon. Members who were not as *au fait* with Ministry of Food ramifications as they might have been, Mr. STRACHEY then expounded the merits of the Rural Pie Scheme, particularly as it affected the Lincolnshire hamlet of Hogsthorpe.

After consideration of the Agricultural Wages Bill the House had a brief but forthright debate on the Government's reluctance to grant marriage allowances to married soldiers under twenty-one. Adopting a new slogan, "Fit for Service, Fit for Marriage," Mr. GEORGE WALLACE pointed out that the act of falling in love could not be controlled by Government regulations or orders.

"Who are we," he asked, "who are the Service chiefs, who is *anybody* to say at what age a young couple should get married?" And that seemed to reflect the general feeling of Members, until disillusionment came from Mr. FRED

Exchange Control Bill which Mr. WILLIAM GALLACHER promptly dubbed as the "Protection of Foolish Capitalists Bill." It was not so long ago, he suggested mischievously, that the capitalists could make investments abroad and lie back, year by year, drawing high interest without having to worry. Things had now changed.

He got the impression that the capitalists, personified apparently in Mr. GALLACHER's eyes by the occupants of the Opposition benches, were "so dull-witted and lived so much in the past with some pathetic idea that what was must continue" that they were incapable of understanding that the Bill was in their own interest.

In spite of an eloquent plea from Mr. HENRY STRAUSS to the Chancellor to allow unlimited foreign travel and not restrict travellers' expenses to a "ludicrous" £75 a year, Mr. DALTON secured his Second Reading. Mr. STRAUSS recalled the words of a French writer that "After fifty there is little left for a man except a fire in his bedroom on a cold night and a little foreign travel in the spring," leaving the quinquagenarians very little to hope for with Mr. SHINWELL and Mr. DALTON in the background.

*Wednesday, November 27th.*—The much-abused Weather Clerks, who in "officialsese" are known as "personnel

employed in the Meteorological Office," found a champion to-day in Earl WINTERTON. Mr. GEOFFREY DE FREITAS, Under-Secretary for Air, had told the House that there were three hundred and seventy-one Clerks of the Weather and altogether 3,018 taking some part in raising or damping hopes of holidaymakers, farmers and the rest.

Earl WINTERTON deplored the unfair attacks made on the Clerks of the Weather for their failure to predict the bad weather of last summer. He thought the Minister should make it clear that in the opinion of the Government the calamitous weather last year, including the sunspots, was entirely due to twenty-five years of Tory mis-government.

Hon. Members were gratified for the assurance of the Minister that the present Government had no intention of attempting to control the weather.

The noble lord later found another cause to champion in a debate on the influence of children's cinema clubs. It was not the case that children of to-day were worse than those of the previous generation. He resented the fact that the cinema was being made the "whipping-boy" for badly behaved children. When he was young there was the "penny dreadful" which sanctimonious people then tried to ban.

At one time it was even considered a fearful thing to go to the theatre. Some thought that a child going to see a Shakespearean play was "taking a ticket for a warmer place."

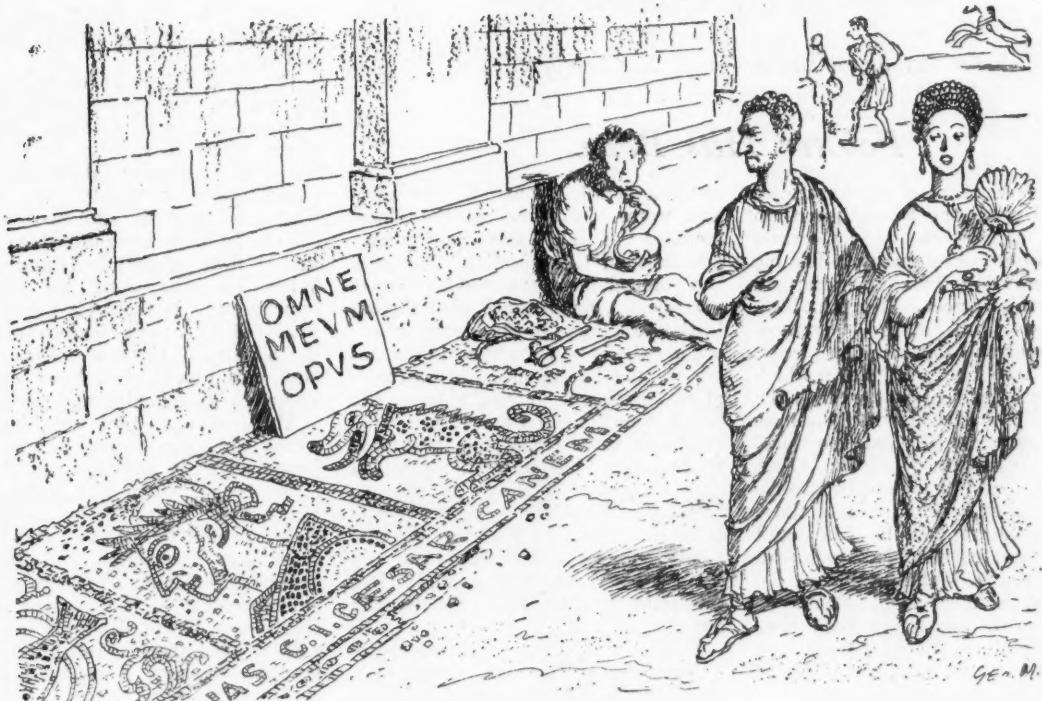
*Thursday, November 28th.*—Opposition to the Government plan for developing the war-time British Restaurant scheme enlivened the day's proceedings. Tory Members strenuously objected to the idea of civic restaurants being allowed to compete with those privately owned even to the extent of selling intoxicating liquors.

They possibly foresaw the dawn of a new era of excuses for erring husbands who might be tempted to explain away their late arrival home by suggesting they had merely been on a "civic crawl."

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"The regulation has now been revoked, and you may change your name without any formalities at all—unless you want to be formal. If your name is Scrooge and you prefer Cratchit you can begin calling yourself (and signing yourself) Cratchit whenever you like and keep on doing it until you have worn out the Scrooge idea in the minds of your friends and acquaintances."—*Daily paper*.

But they'll be pretty annoyed when you tell them you were just working up to Cratchit.





*"Come up, Whitefoot—come up, Lightfoot."*

### Fobster Hits Back.

TO those of us who have known and loved the Bhecktipur Club for many years, it has a certain almost awe-inspiring quality. The big white sprawling building, glimpsed behind a thick screen of bougainvillea, asparagus-fern, mango, bamboo, dengue-trees and fountain-pen plants, seems to have moods of its own which change with the seasons and with the changing lights of the sky. Sometimes it seems immemorially old, the work, perhaps, of prehistoric builders. Those colossal Ionic columns, leading the eye into dim cobweb-laden interiors, those echoing domes, the haunt of bats and of the almost extinct great auk, can hardly be the work of mortal men. So, at any rate, a lot of people think.

It is hardly surprising then that we old members should regard any attempt to tamper with the building, or to alter the decorations even in the

smallest detail, as outright vandalism and worse. Fobster, as the oldest member of all, was particularly adamant on this question. Some of the younger members used to suggest periodically, for instance, that the old leather armchairs in the library, whose origin nobody now living could remember, should be changed for armchairs of newer design. Young Hartog, the S.S.O., complained that while dozing in one of these chairs one afternoon he had been bitten by a rat which apparently had its home in the upholstery. While struggling to escape from the enraged rodent he had dislodged one of the chair arms, and was pitched heavily to the ground. Did this make for efficiency? He thought not.

Fobster's reply was characteristic. "Young fellow," he said, "in my day we didn't worry about a rat-bite or

two. You can consider yourself lucky if it wasn't a man-eating tiger."

And that was that—for the time being, at any rate. But time and tide wait for no man, and even Fobster could not hold up the shifting sands of change for ever. The war came to India. Even in Bhecktipur, distant though it was from any likely scene of hostilities, and improbable though it was that the place had any real existence, change was in the air. Fresh faces appeared in the club. The day came when new officers were actually billeted in the club precincts. We older members of course tried not to notice them. But this was difficult, even though they were housed in a derelict bathroom well to the rear of the main buildings. For one thing, there were so many of them. They invaded the billiards-room, they got into the library, they even appeared in the bar.

The question arose of taking active measures. Fobster suggested that we should lure the whole lot of them into a specially-constructed *basha* under the pretext of a magic-lantern show, and then turn the machine-guns on them. Old Colonel Sugsmith, with the practical wisdom of an old campaigner, pointed out that we had no machine-guns. Fobster merely snorted. Young Hartog poured *dhal* on the troubled waters. "Do nothing," he advised. "Leave them alone and they will fade away like phantoms." As nobody else seemed able to suggest any other course of action, we had to leave it at that.

It turned out, however, that young Hartog was neither so young nor so disinterested as he seemed. He had never forgiven Fobster for turning down his suggestion about the armchairs more than twenty years before. The years passed, and he was still S.S.O. In his twisted mind envy and malice festered like knitting-needles. When the war came he saw his opportunity. In reality it was he who in his official capacity had arranged for the billeting of the new officers in the club. And now, though we did not know it, he was plotting more devilment.

The first sign that anything was wrong came one Sunday morning. I happened to be walking past the old notice-board, which was perhaps one of the most remarkable features of the club. Behind the cracked and bleary glass was a positive collection of historical documents. There was an announcement of the opening of the Oudh and Tirhut Railway in 1864, with a plan allotting members seats for the ceremony. A yellowish paper, curling with age, offered for sale a

lady's velocipede and a collection of wax fruit, once the property of Tippoo Sahib. There was a notice posting Warren Hastings for non-payment of club bills amounting to one hundred and twenty-seven rupees five annas. To place a new notice among these archives was unthinkable. It would have been like pasting a bus time-table into the back of *Domestic Book*. And yet the unthinkable had happened. A vulgar-looking sheet of white paper now flaunted itself in the midst. The very spiders and centipedes looked ashamed as they went about their work behind the glass.

"NOTICE," I read with horror. "A new committee has been formed to administer the affairs of the Bheektipur Club. The first committee meeting will be held to-day at six P.M. to consider the question of new furniture and decorations for the club. The following are members of the new committee." There followed a number of unfamiliar names. But the name at the bottom was only too familiar. There it was in all its shameless effrontery: "J. MacD. Hartog, Secretary."

Tearing open the glass door, I ripped the notice out. In a couple of seconds I was in Fobster's room. I found him mending his fishing-rod with an oxy-acetylene blow-lamp. I showed him the notice, and urbanity changed in a moment to blazing indignation. "When is this—this meeting?" he roared. "Get the real committee together, Sprawson. We'll teach these young beggars a lesson they won't forget in a hurry. As for Hartog—" The way Fobster was playing with his blow-lamp, turning the flame on and off, occasionally igniting the curtains and melting parts of the silver polo-cups which lined his mantelpiece, was more eloquent than any words could have been.

I went away to get the committee together. But here I came up against an unexpected difficulty. It was years now since a committee meeting had been held. And those years had of course taken toll of the older members. Some had died, some had left the station; others had fallen down wells or become wedged in chimneys. Somehow it had never occurred to us to elect new members—it seemed in bad taste, almost. And now Fobster and I were the only members of the old committee left.

Fobster took the news better than I expected. "Very well," he said, "we'll go alone. We'll show them that they can't impose their will on the Club in this arbitrary fashion."

But we never got to that meeting. A heavy lunch of mulligatawny

soup, bindaloo curry, plum pudding, goat's cheese and waffles with maple syrup, washed down with a couple of gallons of iced gin and *nimbu pani*, conspired to defeat us, though conspiracy was perhaps hardly necessary. By the time we woke up it was past midnight. Fobster stirred uneasily. "Probably all just an ugly dream, Sprawson. Nothing to worry about, eh?" "I wish I could believe that, sir." "Well, we shall see, we shall see." We got up and walked slowly through the dimly-lit buildings, savouring with delight each cobweb, each broken cornice, each moth-eaten cushion and hanging. Fobster ran his hand lovingly along the serrated edge of the billiards-table. "Sprawson, we must save all this. We can't let it go. We must save it." "I wish we could, sir. But how?"

A light seemed to glow dimly in Fobster's eye, but it was impossible to be sure.

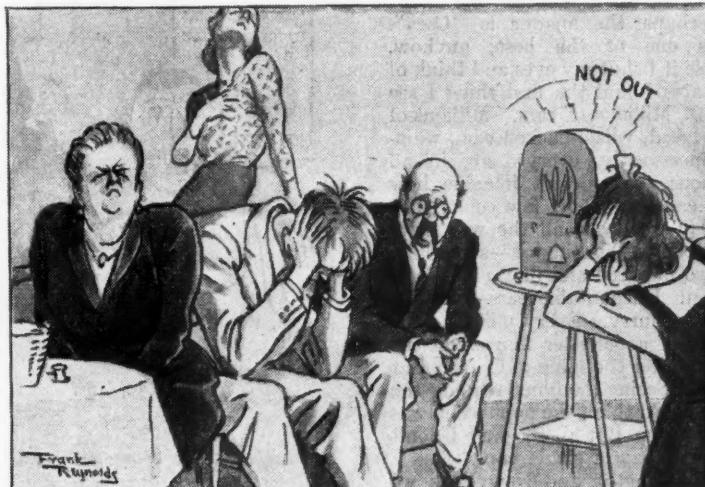
Next morning I met Hartog on the verandah. He wore a sickly smile.

"It won't be long now, Mr. Sprawson," he said, "before we get all this old stuff cleared out. The new committee—"

But he spoke too soon. At that moment Fobster appeared, waving a faded sheet of paper.

"Rules of the Club!" he shouted triumphantly. "I found them under one of the legs of the billiards-table. Listen to this. Rule Eleven," he read. "The right of veto on any proposals whatever shall be vested in the original members of the committee in perpetuity, or during their lifetime, whichever shall be the longer."

The Club was saved!



## Traveller's Talk

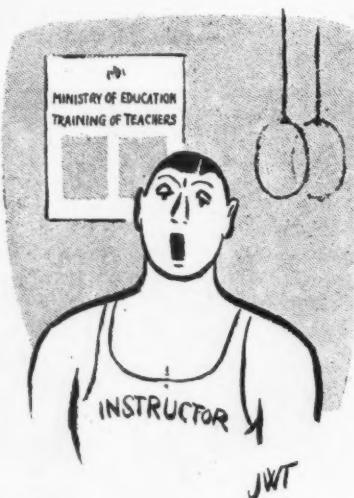
**W**E were there for three weeks. We went to Washington and New York. Shall we write a book about the United States? Of course . . . No, we did not go to the top of the Empire State Building. We meant to, of course. It has more than a hundred stories. It is about three hundred yards high, I gather. Twenty-five years ago, on our last visit, the Woolworth Building was the top. That, I think, was fifty-two stories. It is now a mere shack. Every morning we said "We *must* go to the top of the Empire State—by night and by day". But somehow . . . But we did see the Planetarium—what I call a Star House . . . Wonderful show. Why can't we have one in London—and another in the north? You sit in the dark, in a comfortable chair, and see the stars in their courses—and, what's more, moving in their courses. Then the man stops the machine, and makes the planets do their wayward tricks—at slow speed, or any speed. The place packed—masses of school-children—an educational gold-mine, they say, though I have no figures. . . . What were our impressions of America? Absurd question. I tell you, we saw Washington, D.C., and New York City, no more. And I suppose you want the answer in one word? All right. The answer is "Good". Or the answer is "Kindness". Or perhaps the answer is "Dollars". Because I made a bet that at every restaurant one attended within three minutes one would hear someone at the next table say "Dollars". And I never lost . . . I don't complain of that; because if there weren't so many dollars there couldn't be so much kindness. . . . Or perhaps the answer is "Cars". That's one of the best, anyhow. Because if I shut my eyes and think of the States I find the first thing I see is cars. Millions of cars. Millions of whale-faced, whale-backed cars, whizzing incessantly, everywhere, in all directions. You can't imagine how many cars—and how few cops. The first day we drove all the way from New York to Washington—something like two hundred and fifty miles—all-day run. Uncountable cars—all in a desperate hurry. Every mile like the last bit of a gangster film when the cops are after the King of Crime. But no cops. Seeing the films, reading the books, you'd think the population was mainly cops. But all the way I don't believe we saw a single cop.

In Washington and New York we

saw an occasional traffic-cop, at rush-hours on a hot spot. But they were rare. True their rig is less conspicuous than ours, and some had no uniform at all (yes, there are shortages), but there it was. One felt that New York had ten cars to London's one, and one cop to twenty of London's. The traffic seems to run itself. The discipline is better. It is like a million rockets under control. I shouldn't give the pedestrians many higher marks than ours, and I never saw a "jay-walker" in trouble with a cop. But the cars, though faster, are better-behaved. One is terrified, but not so often. If you cross correctly on the lights you are safe. A car which wants to cut round the corner will stop for you. Which is more than you can say in this big city. And of course the motorist is well looked after, with his Riverside Drive to whisk him round the island, his mighty bridges and lofted speedways to take him out of New York, his wonderful four-track roads to whizz him north and south. He *ought* to behave . . . No, we did *not* go to the top of the Empire State Building. . . . But we drove three times to beautiful Oyster Bay, through the woods of russet and gold and red and many a hue I should not personally attempt to name. . . . And we had lunch beside the skating-place in Rockefeller City. Imagine an open-air ice-rink a few yards from Piccadilly or Bond Street, or the Bank, under blue sky and

bright sun. At one end a French Café, at the other a British Grill. Lunching at either, you watch the young things swooping and circling and showing-off. Sometimes a young thing seems about to dive through the plate-glass into your Clam Chowder Soup or Dry Martini—and that she could almost do, for the cocktails there are generous draughts, not invisible "nips". . . . No, we did not go up the Empire State Building. . . . But we saw an American football game—Pennsylvania University "humbled" (as the headlines say) Columbia University. The game is faster than it was in 1921. They now have some very clever forward passing—the ball thrown like a cricket-ball astonishingly straight and far. But (at the risk of provoking the Veto) we still think that Rugger is better. Now and then there is a thrilling run, but on the whole there is, to our taste, too much Stop and too little Go. The players are padded so that they look like mattresses, and they are relieved or replaced all through the game, not only for injury. There are eleven a side, but twenty or more may play in a single game. But I cannot explain American football to you now. You would like to see it, though, if only for the excitement in the stands (at our game, whenever the ball was carried for more than five yards everyone stood up, which kept one warm), and the "cheer-leaders", bounding like ballet-dancers and guiding the cheers, and the gay bands of the boys parading the field with music in the interval. Far more of the nation seems to go mad about football every Saturday than here, and all the mad-making matches, mark you, are between Universities.

. . . No, we did *not* go up the Empire State Building. . . . It was fun enough to wander about on the ground. The sun shone all the time in Washington which (as you may have heard) is a city of beauty superbly designed and made, a large city in which all the time one feels one is in the country. We praise the Americans for this and that: but I never hear anyone loudly giving them full marks for architecture. We sure should. The sun shone all the time in New York, which (as you may have heard) is a city of unique wonder—and beauty too. No smoke. Blue sky always—or a lonely star or two—over the peaks and spires of the fabulous towers. I will not use the unworthy word "sky-scrappers". And if you think that is a worthy word then you have not really heard about New York. It



"Right! Now change over—odd numbers, the irate parents."



*"Picturesque? Ah! but you wait till it be open."*

is not merely a town where there are many tall buildings. It is something out of a fairy-book, something like nothing in the world, something that must really astonish the gods, whether they like it or not (just possible), something that, personally, I still believe to be quite untrue. How did they make those delicate, distant summits and return to earth alive? Where—to change the key—does all the bath-water go from all those buildings, fifty stories high and more? And how does one work in an office on the 99th floor—with a fifty-mile view? Fairy stories? No one has ever imagined anything like this. As the *Queen Elizabeth* steals in (to a berth, by the way, not much farther from Bond Street than Westminster Pier), and through the morning mist the first of the two man-made mountain-ranges appears, all decent poets, I am sure, retire to their cabins and weep. As dusk approaches and a million

lights, against the purple sky, begin to climb the towers and steeples, until at last the topmost light hangs above the great Orion himself, any fair-minded painter, I swear, puts his paints away and goes off to Greenwich Village or the Twenty-One for a drink. It is too much. I give it up likewise. This is why, perhaps, even the Americans seem to take the impossible, fantastic place for granted, and for you it is just a sea-port with high buildings. . . . And now we have not even mentioned the shops, the magical shops, blazing and beautiful all evening. You may not be able to buy much there, because your Government will not let you spend your own money. But the shops are alright—and exciting—and even open. You may browse round a fine book-shop at 10.30, and be served by men—sorry, “guys”—who evidently like it. The food? The Food? Goodness, I forgot that. My mind is too high. Well, the first time you see a

menu a mile long and realize that you can order more than one main dish—three main dishes, if you like—it is a profound intellectual pleasure. “Intellectual”, merely. For, by the third time, you have learned that your untrained tummy can hardly do justice to one “main dish” of local proportions, and you order accordingly. I used to nibble round the edges of a large and luscious steak, feel over-eaten but happy—and leave half of it. Meanwhile, the steak of the slender young lady next door had disappeared. However, it was always stimulating to read the menu. Mrs. H. went to the Frick, the National Art Gallery at Washington, and all the collections. She says they’re staggering. I went to the Library of Congress. That staggers too. . . . But no, we did not go up the Empire State Building. I’ll tell you why. Because we wanted a good excuse to go back again. And next time I shall hope to be a match for the steak. A.P.H.

## At the Play

## "LADY FREDERICK" (SAVOY)

MR. SOMERSET MAUGHAM tells us that when he first sent this play to the managers they were unable either here or in America to find a leading lady prepared to take the scene in which his heroine cures the callow *Lord Mereston* of his infatuation by letting him into the secrets of her dressing-table. It was regarded as an insult to the profession that an actress should be invited to submit her face in its natural state to the searching rays of the Mediterranean sun. So short-sighted a rejection of a part crammed with opportunity seems curiously out of date, and certainly Miss CORAL BROWNE suffers from no such inhibition. When she comes out of the bedroom she looks something between *Tondeleyo* and a tribal goddess from the Burmese Oberland. Her face is heavily yellowed and shining like a lamp, her eyebrows are doused and her hair trails in a bird's nest; a stouter heart than *Lord Mereston's* might have quailed. It is a tremendously effective entry and the scene which follows is grand comedy. Shivered to his innermost timbers the wretched boy is an unwilling witness of a shattering demonstration of the art of *maquillage*. One by one the horrid contents of the tubes and bottles are revealed, layer by layer the face for which he would have died is restored to him, until at last that little line under the eyes, of suffering patiently borne, for which he had been prepared to stake a peerage and sixty thousand a year, brings *Lady Frederick* back to him in all her rich Irish beauty. It is perhaps the most terrible lesson to which any young lover has ever been subjected on the stage. Mr. VERNON GREEVES, whom I thought a little too wooden elsewhere in the play, handles his end of it adroitly and ties himself in knots to which the switch of spare hair in which he becomes entangled is a superfluous cruelty. As for Miss BROWNE, she plays the scene to perfection, drawing from her brief martyrdom a dividend in laughter which would have made all those

ladies who said "No!" turn bright green under their cherished make-up. Indeed, she plays the entire part consummately well, bringing to it superb poise blended deliciously with malice and unrepentant frivolity. The classic interview with the dunning dressmaker is beautifully put over. We can feel *Lady Frederick* subduing not only *Paradine* and the *Admiral* but the whole of Monte Carlo with her charm, and when in the case of the insolent *Captain Montgomerie* this turns to fire it is no surprise when he is almost consumed on the spot.

This is a far surer choice for revival

Mr. MURRAY MACDONALD (production) and Mr. ANTHONY HOLLAND (décor) must share credit for the brittle, brilliant atmosphere, in tune with the lights of Monaco which wink at us invitingly over the rail of the balcony. Miss BROWNE is nobly dressed. The cynic *Paradine* is played by Mr. EDWIN STYLES with a courtly crispness which sets and holds the tone of the piece. Miss PHYLLIS DARE, really too engaging quite to suggest an outraged dowager, nearly succeeds, and as the over-ripe, over-rich, over-hopeful *Montgomerie* Mr. ANTHONY IRELAND scores all the way. There are few alterations in the script. If one wonders why the time should be put back five years to 1885 there can be no possible doubt of the prudence of adding a tot of brandy to even *Lady Frederick's* persuasions in order to bring to heel a full admiral.

"CASTE"  
(LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)

This eighty-year-old drama by T. W. ROBERTSON comes remarkably fresh. Its frankly paperback story of a heavy dragoon who stoops to the daughter of a slum, leaves her apparently widowed after a bloody affray on the Frontier and returns nonchalantly to find a fine, cry-proof son toasting by the fire, has a naive charm which Mr. PETER ASHMORE has produced with just enough burlesque to bridge the interval without encroaching on the sacred territory of *Young England*. We may begin by jeering at the boneheadedness of the dragoon and his whis-

pered chum and at the artlessness of the *Eccles* family, but we end by becoming their firm friends. Not only is the play very well put together, but its people are drawn by an artist with a sure eye for the comic. Their emotions are quick and warm and straightforward, and far from being dull they evoke a curious sympathy by their very simplicity. When *Esther* sobs out her heart we feel like doing the same, when her sister *Polly*, who is what was called a scream, matches up with a sprightly music-hall plumber we want to dance on the table, and when the old man comes back from the pub flushed with the man-sized bitter of 1867, well, we feel a little drunk too.



CUPID LOSES ON THE ROUGE.

*The Marquis of Mereston* . . . . . MR. VERNON GREEVES  
*Lady Frederick Berolles* . . . . . MISS CORAL BROWNE

than *Our Betters*, which was a piece of social shock-therapy from which the shock had long since evaporated. It is straight comedy of the lightest kind, relying on wit and polite intrigue, and though its motive force springs from preposterous debts and bundles of incriminating letters it dates no more than, say, *Lady Windermere's Fan*. The wit is here in abundance, but though it still comes off it is interesting to note that some of the best lines fail to register with a modern audience unused to the shape of the epigram. This is the play into which, Mr. MAUGHAM sadly confesses, he injected twenty-four new wisecracks at two hours' notice!

It is a family party into which we have been invited, and, by a trick of which ROBERTSON clearly understood the secret, the swords, the whiskers, the terrific dénouements, the tears, the screams and all the rest of the nonsense soon seem every bit as natural as the two tired morons sipping sherry on the sofa who fill out, let us admit it, too much of our modern theatre.

The acting is very much in line with the spirit of the piece. Miss BRENDA BRUCE as *Polly* and Mr. BILL ROWBOTHAM as her gas-fitting lover provide a first-class comedy turn. Mr. MORLAND GRAHAM's boozy old reprobate is straight from Cruikshank. Miss IRIS RUSSELL makes *Esther* a lovable little person, and the *Heavies* are safe with Mr. CLEMENT McCALLIN and Mr. FRITH BANBURY. It is only with Miss ELLIOT MASON as the aristocratic mama that one quarrels. She is a most accomplished actress, but far too human and comfortable to play *Debrett* on its hind legs. This is, after all, a Victorian novelette, and the

acidulous grandee who used to figure menacingly on the covers was a much more predatory old buzzard than Miss MASON could ever be.

**"THERE ARE CRIMES AND CRIMES"**  
(NEW LINDSEY)

The third of our revivals (though played for the first time in England) is as welcome as the other two. It is a strong cup of tea in which, as was common with STRINDBERG, the arrangement of the leaves holds out hope of nothing but the bleakest future for the ladies concerned. In contrast the young playwright-hero, who behaves abominably, gets away very lightly and with the blessing of the Church into the bargain. Yet as a study of near-insanity and of the way human beings can be hounded by their own actions, even when these are within the law, the play is absorbing, and it is very competently acted by a cast which Mr. ESMÉ PERCY has moulded expertly to the necessities of a small stage. On the night of his first

success the playwright leaves his homely mistress and her child for a glamorous sculptress and, the child suddenly dying, the Paris mob turns against him and he and the sculptress suspect each other madly of its death. Though he loved it he had cursed it as an obstacle to his new life; and this is the crime which he has to expiate through days and nights of crazy self-torture, a crime from which he is only half-released by the discovery that the child had died of natural causes. His relationship with the sculptress, beginning in passionate love and ending in passionate hatred, is made extremely dramatic, and the two parts are powerfully played by Miss WANDA ROTH and Mr. MANNING WHILEY. Mr. ANTONY EUSTREL, Miss ANNE TRIGO and Mr. TRISTAN RAWSON add sound performances. STRINDBERG seems to have been more at home with the behaviour of the human soul than with that of the French police, whose pincenez are all right but whose security is lamentable.

ERIC.

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(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### Montgomery

PROBABLY the day is not far distant when a full-length biography of anyone in the public eye will be put together much more expeditiously than Mr. ALAN MOOREHEAD'S *Montgomery : A Biography* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 12/6). But by present standards Mr. MOOREHEAD has not been culpably lethargic. He opens his account of "the dynamic little man in the black beret" with a glimpse of "the first well-known member of the clan," Roger de Montgomery, who set out from Falaise in 1066 as "second-in-command to William the Conqueror." Then a jump of some centuries to Samuel Montgomery, a prosperous eighteenth-century wine merchant, and so, by way of Dean Farrar, his daughter and his son-in-law, Bishop Montgomery, to their fourth child, Bernard, the future field-marshal. It is his intractability from the beginning which Mr. MOOREHEAD chiefly emphasizes. As a small boy he was always in trouble with his autocratic mother. As a second lieutenant he was unsociable and, in the opinion of his fellow subalterns, unreasonably interested in the art of war. As a lieutenant-colonel in Alexandria in the early nineteen-thirties he was always setting everyone right. After Dunkirk his intense self-confidence and concentrated energy altogether outweighed his lack of social charm. He was needed, and how he supplied the need from El Alamein to the Rhine is unfolded by Mr. MOOREHEAD with the skill and speed of a first-rate reporter, and with all the appearance, if something less than the reality, of complete candour. H. K.

#### Eden City

*The Townsman* (METHUEN, 10/6) portrays a slightly post-dated Martin Chuzzlewit who, faced with an appalling

slice of America in the raw, sticks to his squatter's task and makes a success of it. The author, "JOHN SEDGES," is not JOHN SEDGES; and from internal evidence—a marked sympathy with the hardships of women in pioneer home-making and a sound conviction of the necessity and loftiness of their work—one suspects a feminine hand. The principal figure, however, is Jonathan Goodliffe, who, arriving steerage from a Lancashire cottage in the wake of a wastrel father and a magnanimous mother, adopts a Kansas mud-flat, complete with blizzards, prairie-fires and an abundant lack of every amenity, as his object in life. The novel is more valuable as a record of Median, the "Eden City" of Jonathan's aspirations, than as the portrait of a pioneer who is just not long-sighted enough. He aims, as his community would say—the Goodliffe family never speak Lancashire—at becoming the town's first schoolmaster; and while fighting the colour-bar, stands out even more fiercely for the divorce of book-learning from mere craftsmanship. It is a characteristic snobbery of the period; but one is left with the forlorn, and perhaps mistaken, impression that "JOHN SEDGES" shares it. H. P. E.

#### Shakespeare Production

In *Moonlight at the Globe* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 9/6) Mr. RONALD WATKINS has reconstructed *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as he believes it was acted by Shakespeare's Company at the Globe, and has tested this reconstruction in a very successful performance of the play in Harrow School Speech Room, a building which with its semi-circular auditorium and its spacious well sufficiently resembles Shakespeare's theatre. Taking for granted Shakespeare's mastery of stage-craft, Mr. WATKINS has



"Are you SURE Scotch woodcock is off?"

applied himself to discovering Shakespeare's intentions throughout the play, inferring them from the words themselves; for he has repeatedly found that the dramatist's instructions to the actors are embedded in the text. On the Elizabethan stage with its simple properties, Mr. WATKINS argues, it rested with the actors to speak Shakespeare's verse so as to evoke pictures in the audience's imagination; a method much more satisfying than reliance on painted scenery. How careful Shakespeare was to build up a scene he illustrates by giving the many references to the moon and "to-morrow night" in the early part of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; and he also suggests that such flights as Oberon's picture of himself sitting on a promontory, watching Cupid loosing a shaft at "the imperial votaress," gain by being spoken on an unlocalized stage with no fixed landscape to divert the audience from Oberon's words. Those who prefer reading to watching Shakespeare might push Mr. WATKINS's argument a step further; but as a guide to the stage presentation of Shakespeare this book is both ingenious and convincing.

H. K.

#### Glassware

*English Glass* (COLLINS, 4/6) has a long and fascinating history, even if you set aside church-windows, paste jewelry and vitreous architecture from the Crystal Palace onwards. Mr. W. B. HONEY, Keeper of South Kensington's

Department of Ceramics, has summarized the rise of the craft, its technique and history, from the coating of blue glaze on the Egyptian stone bead to the entertaining and practical ovenware of the contemporary British housewife. From the fifteenth century on there were, roughly, two kinds of glassware in England: Venetian glass and its Continental and English derivatives, and the traditional bottle-glass used by the poor and handed on from the Romans. As the latter is just as attractive in its way as the former, it seems a pity to encourage the greed or snobbery that prefers a machine-made output of expensive-looking glassware to a humbler glass that a small craftsman might enjoy making. Apart, however, from its rather inhuman conclusions, the book should prove as acceptable to the ordinary glass-quaffer as to the connoisseur. The illustrations—as is usual with "Britain in Pictures"—are admirably representative, whether they depict a pleasingly *art-nouveau* Tudor medicine-bottle, a fountain of Victorian spun-glass, or the sky-scraper motif of a modern beaker.

H. P. E.

#### Mr. Punch's Queer Relations

*The Puppet Theatre* (FABER, 12/6) is pretty stiff reading. Mr. JAN BUSSELL, who is responsible for the biggest team of marionettes in the country, is out to give as much help as he can within the limits of a small book to those planning puppets of their own, whether in a modest way in the nursery or on a big carpentered stage with a lighting set capable of reproducing all the effects of a real theatre; there is therefore much detail, but Mr. BUSSELL writes well and nobody could have expounded this complex art more clearly. Its problems are fascinating. To be a good puppet-master you have first to be a practical artist and then a person of ingenuity, judgment and unlimited patience; and still you will fail unless you know enough about the human mind to be able to play tricks with the imagination of your audience. "Puppet" is the generic word for the whole family, which consists of marionettes, worked by strings from above; glove puppets, such as Mr. P. himself; flat puppets, like those used in model theatres; rod puppets, jointed creatures worked by rods from below; and shadow puppets, which are flat and jointed and also worked by rods. Marionettes are usually made of wood, plaster or papier-mâché, and that they can be exquisite is shown by Mr. FRANCIS GOWER's delightful drawings of oriental figures. Mr. BUSSELL bravely suggests that puppets could be used to brighten education. No child will contest this, but one would like to be present if ever it appears on the agenda of the Headmasters' Conference.

E. O. D. K.

#### A Happy Way to Live

A book which is about archaeological exploration in Syria and of digging not for bodies (though there is one irrelevant exhumation) but in order to discover the ways of long past lives, a book that contains only a few pleasant and entertaining villainies, that begins with a parody of Lewis Carroll and ends with a wistful little epilogue about "that gentle fertile country and its simple people, who know how to laugh and how to enjoy life; who are idle and gay, and who have dignity, good manners and a great sense of humour," may be a surprise to the fans of Hercule Poirot's creator. Yet *Come Tell Me How You Live* (COLLINS, 10/6), by AGATHA CHRISTIE MALLOWAN, could not be a disappointment to anyone, though she describes it as "small beer—a very little book, full of everyday doings and happenings." Its one fault is that it is too small, for one romps through it, delighting in the adventures of Mrs. MALLOWAN, her

husband and her archaeological friends. We are told less of the finds than of the native finders, who learned to substitute forgeries and were prepared to quarrel to the death, and less of difficulties than of fun, though there were plenty of the former. In fact the book is enchanting from cover to cover.

B. E. B.

### "Ernie"

Stories of a rise to power from lowly beginnings are sure of a welcome from many fighters who hope for similar good fortune. Mr. TREVOR EVANS is early in the field with *Bevin* (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 10/6), in which he gives a full account of the remarkable career of our present Foreign Secretary. That career may be said to have started at Bristol, to which city Bevin ran away at the age of thirteen. He became there the first secretary of a Right-to-Work committee established by the dockers and other workers of the city. He tried to enter local politics, but was heavily defeated. However, the carmen's branch of the Dockers' Union was born, and he became its first chairman. Having put Bristol in order and made the acquaintance of Ben Tillett, he was sent to the West Country and afterwards to South Wales to win Cardiff and Newport for his union. In 1915 came his election as one of the delegates to the Trades Union Congress. He went to America to the Convention of the Federation of Labour—the *Lusitania* had been sunk and there was not much competition for that particular job—and on his return became a member of the Port and Transit Committee which started the scheme for transport workers' battalions to be formed from the Home Army for use in the ports where other labour was short. So to the Great Strike of 1926, in which Bevin figured prominently, declaring among other things that it would be "the greatest godsend to the country if Mr. Churchill were out of office for evermore." But the second World War came, Churchill succeeded Chamberlain, and in May 1940 Bevin became Minister of Labour and National Service, at the age of 59. Mr. EVANS has written a chronicle of a crowded life which gives an adequate picture of the man but makes, perhaps, rather heavy reading.

L. W.

### This Wales

Against a setting that is chiefly not of "this England" but of this Wales, *Blessed Plot* (MACMILLAN, 8/6) concerns itself principally with financial enterprise and the political strings that it often aspires to pull; Mr. ERNEST WATKINS has, in fact, written what might be described as a novel for business men. His hero, Llewellyn Jones, whom we first meet, a sergeant in the Maritime Royal Artillery, lying unconscious with a smashed arm on a raft at sea, has been before the war a city solicitor, and he is, moreover, a nephew of that well-known building contractor Lord Llanfairpwllgwyngyll, so it is not surprising that, when he is invalided, he soon becomes an assistant to the wealthy Mr. Aubrey Potts, of Potts Pools Ltd., in his attempt to establish a British Lido on the coast of Wales. The coveted site, having been the gift of a grateful nation to a successful general, cannot be sold by his heir without the passing of a Private Bill; through various unlucky chances opposition is aroused and only a timely by-election and the return of Mr. Potts as local Member make his dreams come true. The detail of much manoeuvring between politicians, Civil Servants and journalists has a slightly Trollopean flavour which is very pleasant, and equally attractive are the views of life held by the heroine and her entertaining and forceful mother. Llewellyn, finally,

avoids any further part in the development of the estate now known as "Rainbow's End," and goes abroad for Unrra, and the reader has all the more respect for him in consequence. Mr. WATKINS should be encouraged to see that this very readable first novel is not his last.

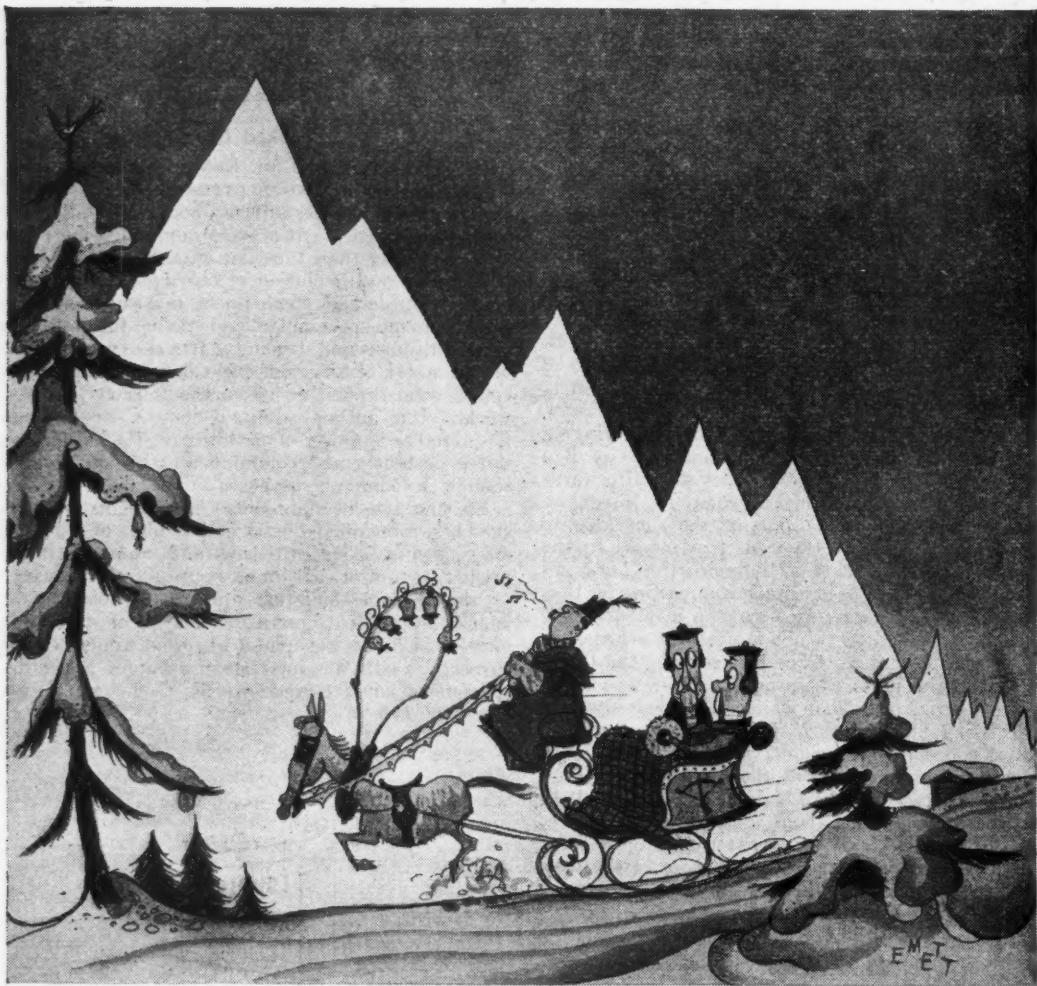
B. E. S.

### Packed Chronicle

It would be a pity if Mr. ERNEST SHORT's *Fifty Years of Vaudeville* (EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, 12/6) were overlooked as just another of those books of random memories by nostalgic fogies. It is something much more intelligent and rewarding than that—an orderly objective survey of the history and evolution of our lighter stage; burlesque, old-time music-hall, comic opera, musical comedy, concert-party, revue, spectacular and revue intimate, spectacle inset with jokes and dancing. It makes a valuable chapter of our social history, reflecting in increasing pace, keener competition, mounting costs, the tensions of the greater world. Our author admits gains as well as losses; is no prejudiced praiser of past time. He has enjoyed himself persistently and communicates his enjoyment. And though the comprehensiveness and accuracy of his chronicle is his first aim he illuminates his margins with character sketches, remembered jests and strokes of wit on and off stage, well-weighed criticisms and comments and a surprising amount of that round-figure accountancy so beloved of the theatre—building and production costs, monies won or lost by entrepreneurs, salaries of stars and chorus girls—which in a less honest historian would be thoroughly suspect. . . . In the interests of accuracy he will no doubt welcome a small correction: R. C. Lehmann was never editor of *Punch*.

J. P. T.





*"And the whole idea of this winter holiday was to keep my mind off the Sales Chart."*

### *More Blueprints for My Autobiography*

THE news that a Common Cold Unit of the Ministry of Health is about to bombard a group of robust artisans with the latest streamlined microbes prompts me to give the world earlier than I had intended an account of my researches along similar though more unselfish lines.

I was spending the winter of 1909 with my aunt Emily in her mansion near Bagshot. A large, powerful woman with a chestnut moustache, she was accustomed to take life as it came, having been married to an Albanian poet who had lowered the level of her

cellar by at least a foot before running off to play the back end of a horse in a circus in Equador, the front end consisting of a Circassian lady with whose remarkable symmetry he had fallen deeply in love. He was a bad poet and an improbable husband, and as all reports showed him to be making good as a horse Aunt Emily took his desertion as philosophically as the rest of us, who had all found him a somewhat unnerving host; especially as his departure left her more freedom to indulge her unbridled curiosity about tribal customs. Advanced years had

obliged her to say good-bye to the tropics, but she still at long range plied medicine-men and chieftains with infuriating inquiries about their private affairs. Compost Hall, a huge Victorian house which rambled incontinently over a good deal of Berkshire, had many dramatic ties with the Zambezi, and sheltering beneath its ghastly crenellations were never fewer than half a dozen limping voodoo-hunters recovering from arrow-wounds, witch-doctor bites, beri-beri and the other material drawbacks of anthropology in the field. I myself was

hanging about at the time for a colonial governorship, which in the event went to the wrong man; and finding back-gammon with the inmates failing to absorb all my energies I suggested to Aunt Emily, who had for long been a victim of ferocious catarrh, that I should investigate the common cold. My reputation as a practical worker in the sphere of science being already established by the vogue enjoyed by my bevel-driven, oscillating mouse-trap, based on a little-known variation of Boyle's Law, Aunt Emily naturally promised me her full support.

I was quickly on the trail of COLD, DRAUGHTS and DAMP. Compost Hall boasted all three in good measure, and I found them in their finest flower at the head of the main staircase, where a spumy gale blew with such force that guests on their way to the bathroom were obliged to assume an almost prone position, as if crossing an Atlantic deck. Here I took up my stance, clad only in a calico nightdress of my aunt's, a voluminous garment which carried a floral design round the neck and reached to my feet. These were bare. I had a bucket of water and plenty of graph-paper within easy reach and a stop-watch in my hand. Every five minutes I intoned a scale, intent to catch the first hint of nasal distortion. I think the total effect must have been a little eerie, because one evening a sage who had just arrived to convalesce after an inconclusive conference with some cannibals took such fright that he plunged screaming madly down the back stairs and broke both his legs, reappearing on all fours with an elephant-gun which the butler had to inveigle from him at considerable risk to life. My plan, I need scarcely explain, was to vary the three factors in such a way that a clear picture of causation could bit by bit be built up. The results were fascinating. I found, for instance, that with a heavy Chinese screen to windward and a dry nightdress I could hold out for two hours seventeen minutes and forty-two seconds without sneezing. Wearing socks and trousers the interval grew to four hours and three minutes, but a fur cap and a pink flannel jacket only took it to three twenty-one. A dampered torso accelerated things by seventy minutes, wet feet by twelve, the removal of the screen on an average by half an hour. In nothing but the nightdress, wet, with the screen removed, my membranes seldom remained unaffected for more than thirteen minutes.

I had made great strides. Even the professor in plaster-of-Paris admitted

I was on the threshold of something big, and Aunt Emily hinted delicately that a bundle of brewery ordinaries scheduled at her passing for the more intimate interrogation of Ethiopia might after all come to rest nearer home. Why, then, did my experiments suddenly cease? It is a curious story with an ironic twist. In the first place my ability to catch cold entirely dried up. Even a twelve-hour vigil in the rose-garden and the wet night-dress and eight degrees of frost failed to evoke a single sneeze. I had become immune. Aunt Emily was heart-broken and the crippled pundits were much subdued. No sooner, however, had I settled down again to a normal life than a new parlourmaid, tripping over a young gazelle which had just come with the compliments of the Umpopo Fraternity, emptied a plate of clear soup down my neck. Unwilling to blast the poor girl's career I said nothing, and before dinner was out a heavy cold had rendered me quite speechless. Pneumonia set in the next day and for a week I was despaired of. When the crisis was over a physician with a knighthood warned me that future experiments must be along more ambiguous lines, while a second fortified by a baronetcy told me bluntly that any further monkeying in wet calico could only be regarded as an invitation to my funeral.

If the Ministry of Health care to apply to me they are very welcome to

my laboratory dossier, and if Mr. Bevan would like to earn an easy peerage for himself by carrying on my experiments in person I shall be delighted to let him have my Aunt Emily's nightdress. It was unfortunately all that remained of her estate after the habits of Ethiopia had been thoroughly sorted, sized and plumbed.

ERIC.

## Ferns

THE young fern is a shy spinster  
With a hard knob of hair.  
Her eyes are always on the  
ground,  
She is afraid to take the air,  
She sits and sits with back all bent  
and shoulders round,  
Curled over in her chair.

The green fern is a fair lady.  
Her train flows through the grass.  
She bows and turns, as ladies do,  
Revolving at the looking-glass.  
Between her waving fan, her train, her  
tapping shoe,  
No foot of man can pass.

The bracken is an old gipsy  
Whose lips were never kissed.  
On solitary moors she lingers,  
And sighs and shakes a clenched  
brown fist,  
And pulls close, with her long, lean,  
double-jointed fingers,  
Her shawl of fine soft mist. O. D.



"Are you the lady requiring help?"

## Recruiting

**S**YMPSON'S first fine careless rapture at being a prospective Parliamentary candidate is beginning to dwindle. He had imagined that the duties consisted of occasionally appearing for a few brief moments before an enthusiastic audience, to whom he would explain his policy tersely but wittily, to the accompaniment of loud applause.

He still hopes that this may be the usual lot of a candidate, but this month his committee is conducting a recruiting campaign. There are one hundred and ninety-seven streets and roads in Sympson's division, and the committee decided that by dividing the streets and roads evenly among the active workers it should be possible to canvass every family, and to get a good proportion of them to become members of the Association and pay half-a-crown or more every year.

Then a meeting of active workers was called, and the attendance was just a little bit disappointing. Sympson made a rough arithmetical calculation, and decided that if all those present were to take four roads each the thing could just be managed. The chairman asked them one by one how many roads they would take, and the first person she asked said she would take two. The second rattled completely, pleading a sick aunt, and unfortunately the next person the chairman asked was Sympson himself.

"I'll manage seven," he said with a cheery smile.

The words were hardly out of his

mouth when he wondered why he had spoken them, and when the roads were finally allocated, the locals deliberately snaffling the short roads and blind turnings, he realized more than ever that he had made a mistake. He was landed with the seven longest roads in the division, and was faced with making, in all, about 1,726 calls.

Just for curiosity I accompanied him on his first evening's work. It was of course raining hard. We started by trying Acacia Grove, but after six doors had been banged in our faces with ungentlemanly expletives the seventh victim explained that another canvasser had called on the same errand twenty minutes earlier, and on consulting his list Sympson found that he had no Acacia Grove in his territory, only Acacia Avenue.

We found Acacia Avenue and drew a polite Communist and a long-winded Liberal, but at the third house we struck lucky. The man who opened the door had a kind face and a hearty manner.

"You're Mr. Sympson," he said with a mixture of admiration and awe. "I saw your photo in the paper. I have never before voted for your party, but your views interest me. Come inside and have a cup of tea."

We went inside, and the fellow introduced us to his wife and daughter. Most intelligent people they were. They listened to everything Sympson said, putting a shrewd question here and there when he seemed in danger of

running down, which was not very often. Then while Sympson was drinking his tea and munching a nice bit of cake they had given him, I threw out a few observations about the nationalization of road haulage in a rather neat way, and the daughter, who was a pretty girl, said that she had never thought of it in quite that way before, and the mother said that it was wonderful how some people could hold such a lot of facts in their heads and not get them mixed. Then the father asked me what division I was putting up for, and when I told him I had not been adopted for anywhere yet, he said what a pity it was, with Parliament as short of brains as it is nowadays.

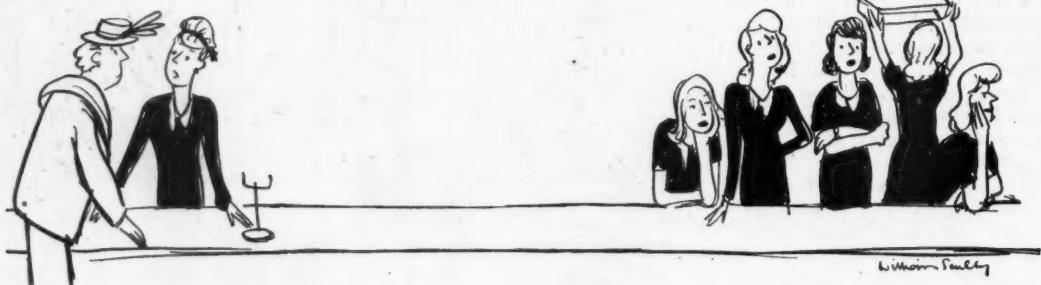
It was nearly ten o'clock when we left, and Sympson said that it wasn't worth calling anywhere else, so we went back to the office, and the agent asked us how we had got on.

"We've won three votes," said Sympson. "A man named Hoggins and his wife and daughter, at 14 Acacia Avenue."

"Did they pay their half-crowns?" asked the agent, who has a horribly material outlook.

"We forgot to ask them," admitted Sympson.

"It wouldn't have been any good if you had," said the agent, "because Hoggins is chairman of the Opposite Party. He always asks inexperienced canvassers inside and gives them a cup of tea and strings them along, to make sure they won't have time to visit anywhere else in the street."



*"I'm afraid NOT—we only get half a dozen pairs very occasionally."*

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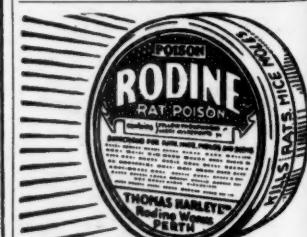
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The question of Foreign Exchange still prevents the importation of Harvey's famous wines. Shipping space is also a consideration. We, like our many patient friends, keep hoping—with an eye on the butts of sherry and pipes of port, which are ready and waiting—in Spain and Portugal!

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Wine Merchants to His Majesty The King

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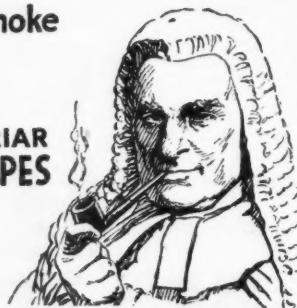


BRIAR  
PIPES

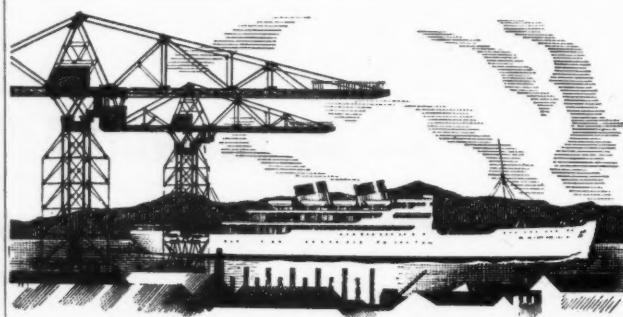
The demand for Orlik pipes far exceeds the supply, but the quality is still as good as ever. If you have difficulty in obtaining a genuine Orlik London-made pipe, please write to us for address of the nearest Tobacconist who can supply you.

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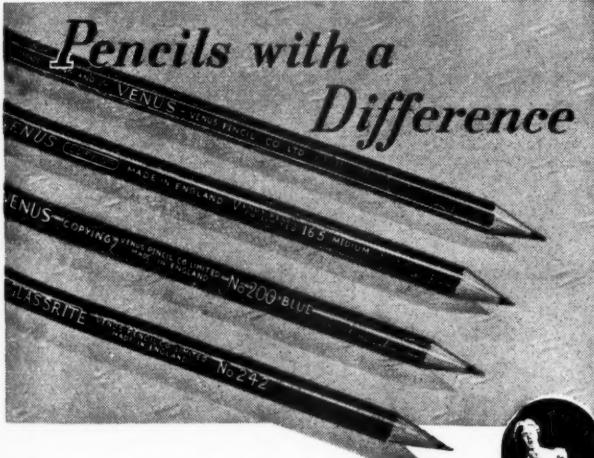


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**Growing up**  
**the WRIGHT**  
**way**

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**WRIGHT'S**  
*Coal Tar Soap*



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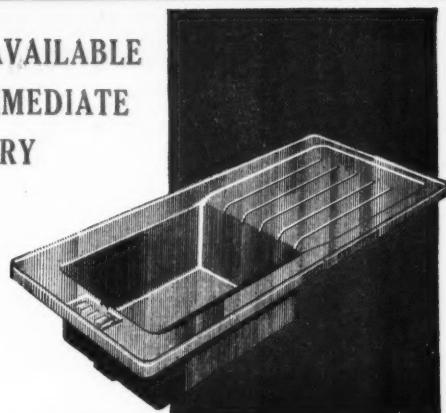


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23.7.46.

Sir,

*It may interest you to know that in October, 1942, I bought from the Army and Navy Stores in Calcutta a 4 oz. tin of Punchbowle Tobacco as a reserve when I went up the line to Imphal.*

*I carried this tin of tobacco throughout the siege of Imphal and it continued with me right through the battle of Burma to Rangoon. It accompanied me back to India and eventually back to England. I opened this tin last week and found the tobacco in perfect condition. It has endured some of the most extreme and trying conditions and climatic changes.*

*I realise that you must have received many letters in this strain, but I thought that I too would like to add my appreciation of Barneys tobacco.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*\_\_\_\_\_, Capt., R.A.S.C.*

*Enclosed packing No. for information.*

*(The original letter can be verified at the Barneys Bureau, 24, Holborn, London, E.C.1.)*

**Tribute to  
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